



Higgins Lake Property Owners Association

AuSable River Center, 211 North Main Street
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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



Spring is easing its way, albeit intermittently, to the Higgins area, between wintry snow showers and freezing winds. Although the HLPOA Board has continued work on projects throughout the winter, we look forward to the summer activities. In preparation we have scheduled two meetings: one with the local DNR to address water quality and invasive species and one with the local safety officers and township supervisors. We'll continue the monthly Cut River

flow-rate testing and begin year four of our invertebrate studies, collect data at launch sites, and so much more. HLPOA is in the process of updating our website and pursuing the membership drive.

Where can you be of assistance? Invite family members and neighbors to join, volunteer to help with the website and/or serve on a committee, attend the Annual Meeting on July 19, and watch as more possibilities are shared.

Hope you find this information valuable as we work to protect, preserve and enhance Higgins Lake. We truly appreciate your support.

Charlene Cornell, President HLPOA

Dedicated to Preserving the Quality and Beauty of Higgins Lake

Higgins Lake Watershed - GIS Mapping of Wells and Septic Fields

Environmental Note:

The two townships of Lyon and Gerrish contain most of the resident population in the Higgins Lake Watershed. Drinking water for this population is supplied primarily from wells. The proximity of these wells to adjacent septic fields is regulated by the Health Department.

Background and Project Introduction:

A base level Geographic Information System (GIS) map of residences and businesses in Gerrish and Lyon Townships exists and is available to the public. This base layer will show the location of all buildings and roads in both townships. The Central Michigan District Health Department (CMDHD) has historical records of most well and septic system installations in these townships in their publicly available permit records files. These paper files are being scanned into an Amalgam LLC "Fetch GIS" application where they are then electronically attached to their proper physical locations on the GIS base map for easy reference and graphical display.

This "Fetch GIS" mapping is now being built by the CMDHD. It will eventually show the location and condition of septic fields and drinking water wells throughout the Higgins Lake Watershed. This map will be continuously updated as new information becomes available in the future.

This process has been successfully piloted by the CMDHD in Gladwin County's Cedar River Watershed, and is being used for public outreach and education. To view this example, please click, or copy and paste into a Google Chrome browser, the following hot link: <https://www.cmdhd.org/cedarriverwatershed>

Project Progress and Current Plan:

Approximately 6,000 parcels exist in Lyon and Gerrish Townships. Most of the available files for Lyon have been examined and uploaded into Fetch GIS. Work will begin on Gerrish before the end of April. An additional secretarial person has been added to the Roscommon CMDHD office to focus on this project. In addition, two volunteers from Higgins Lake have joined the CMDHD team to help the mapping proceed timely. The available well and septic permit records for both Lyon and Gerrish should be included in the "Fetch GIS" mapping in the next few months.

Next Steps Project Plan:

Once the available and likely accurate permit records have been included in the "Fetch GIS" Watershed map, the gap between buildings with complete data attached and those with incomplete, obviously erroneous, or absent information will be clear. The next step for the CMDHD team will then be to ground proof and update the map with efforts in the field. Those activities should begin soon in the second quarter of 2025.

Test Your Well Water this Spring – Your Well Water is Your Responsibility

Every year test your well water for coliform bacteria, *E.coli*, copper, and lead. If you use private well water in the State of Michigan, it is your responsibility to test and maintain your well and the surrounding area. Contaminants in drinking water can cause short-term health problems while others can cause long-term problems. We are encouraging any of our members who have older wells, or wells with depths less than 100', to have their wells tested for nitrate or nitrite contamination. Both local and state water testing facilities test for PFAS for a fee.

Local water testing is available through Raven Analytical Laboratories 989-275-4790.

State of Michigan water testing <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/safety-injury-prev/environmental-health/topics/care-for-mi-drinking-water/testing>

Goose Egg and Nest Destruction



Once again, this year, Higgins Lake Swimmer's Itch Organization (HLSIO) will take the lead on goose control for Higgins Lake.

The DNR offered free permits for nest and egg destruction. HLSIO applied for a permit, received approval and hired Goose Busters to do the field work. Goose Busters will make their first trip to Higgins Lake in mid-April and a second trip about two weeks later.

Last year they found seven nests and destroyed a total of about forty eggs.

Finding goose nests is not an easy task even for professionals. Goose nests are usually right on or near the waterfront and look like a pile of straw. (There are many good examples of nest available by googling "goose nests".) If you are at the lake in April, please look for goose nests in your area and contract John Ogren at djogren@gmail.com or 713-851-4388 with information on any location. A picture would also be helpful.

Nest and egg destruction will not eliminate all geese from Higgins Lake but will help to keep the population under control and is all we are permitted to do. Your help in locating nests will be appreciated.



Ice Out – “She is Thawed Day! April 7, 2025

Herb Weatherly reported that Higgins Lake was officially thawed on April 7, 2025, with 37.375” of snow for the 2024-2025 season. To view previous years Ice In/Out Dates and total snow fall for years in the past, go to <http://hlpoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Ice-InOut-1963-2025.2.pdf>

Be prepared before an emergency strikes

Roscommon County will now use the Genasys ALERT notification system to alert residents about issues that affect your safety. Sign up to receive emergency alerts at: roscommon.genasys.com/portal

Spongy (Gypsy) Moth Spray

Spray to suppress Spongy Moth is scheduled this Spring. To track Spongy Moth Spray activity go to: <https://www.roscommoncounty.net/218/Spongy-Moth-Program>

Board of Directors – HLPOA Board Member Position Available

Currently there is an opening available on the Higgins Lake Property Owners Association (HLPOA) Board. If you have an interest in applying, please forward a short resume to hlpoa0@gmail.com or mail directly to HLPOA, PO Box 55, Roscommon, MI 48653



Road End Signage

The Riparian Committee members will continue to monitor road end activity in the summer period ahead. HLPOA is responsible for maintaining the Public Notice signs with the Jacob’s restriction at the road ends. We also maintain Public Act 56 signs at locations designated by the Roscommon Sheriff’s Department or the Gerrish Township police. Some of the signs are as shown in the picture, but many are installed on short wooden or metal posts at the road end. For any questions, please contact John Ogren at djogren@gmail.com or 713-851-4388.

Help Wanted

Our Board Members work diligently for HLPOA. There are times when additional assistance would be of benefit to this organization. Please consider devoting some of your time and talents to an area of your expertise. Contact one of the Board Members or the HLPOA office (989-275-9181 or hlpoa0@gmail.com) to volunteer.

- Familiar with WordPress? Assist in data entry and maintenance of our website. (Please note, this is currently being revamped.)
- Help with the installation and use of MailChimp for our mailings.
- Share your skills by maintaining our data base.
- Become a “ready” volunteer to help fold, stuff envelopes and other jobs throughout the year.
- Volunteer to work on one of our committees.
- Attend and represent HLPOA at local township meetings (gerrishtownship.org, lyontwp-higginsmi.gov) and/or Roscommon County Commission Meetings (roscommoncounty.net)
- Revamp “Welcome Packet”. Become a part of the “Welcome to Higgins Lake” team welcoming new homeowners on Higgins Lake.

- Apply to join the Health of Higgins Lake Initiative Steering Committee
<https://gerristownship.org/health-of-higgins-lake/>
- Update HLPOA social media posts.



Upcoming Events

July 2, 2025, 5:00-7:00 pm

Sips, Dips, & Chips

Cornell Beach

July 19, 2025, 8:45 am

HLPOA Annual Meeting

Roscommon High School

July 25, 2025, 10:00 am

Higgins Lake Foundation Greenbelt Seminar

Presented by Otsego Conversation Nature Center

Ralph MacMullan Center

RSVP 989-9183 or higginslake-foundation.org

Special Thank you:

Paula Pritchardt and Nanette Guggemos

Thank you, Donors:

General Fund: Dan & Cindy Ferwerda, Don Heys, Fred & Ginny Krauss, Club Michihiggi, B. Calvin Philips, Paul & Eve Ryznar

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In Memory of Clark Purdy: The staff of Interior Solutions

2024-2025 HLPOA Board: President - Charlene Cornell, Vice President - Greg Semack, Secretary - Herb Weatherly, Treasurer - Bruce Carleton. Directors: Wayne Brooks, Patty Dennis, Curt DeVoe, Becky Gibson, John Ogren and Fred Swinehart. Administrative Assistant - Kathleen Barger.