

THE GLQO WATERSHED JOURNAL



The Gull Lake Watershed includes Gull Lake, Little Long Lake, Grassy Lake, Little Gull Lake, Miller Lake, Bullhead Lake, Duck Lake, Backus Lake, Dake Lake, Elliston Lake, Mud Lake, Wintergreen Lake, and Prairieville Creek.

SHORELINE MANAGEMENT IS KEY

This information is provided by the Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership with permission.

Property owners look for ways to control shoreline erosion when it becomes a problem. This typically results in the use of hard structures called seawalls. A seawall is any hard-surfaced wall installed along the shore to block the waves from reaching the land. The walls are typically parallel to the shore with a vertical surface facing the water. They are made out of many materials, including concrete, steel sheet pile, wood and rock filled wood structures. Property owners are drawn to seawalls because they are perceived to be more stable. However, seawalls create problems in the lake.

- **Scouring of the lake bottom:** Seawalls do not allow for absorption of the energy that waves bring in. As waves hit the seawall, the energy from the waves does not disappear. This energy is directed downwards and sideways. The energy that is directed down scoops out the lake bottom - this is called scour. Scouring of the lake bottom increases with lake size and wave height. Habitat is lost because of this scouring effect and the lake can become deeper in front of a seawall as compared to a nearby property without a seawall. Scouring can also go deep enough to undercut the bottom of a seawall causing a seawall failure.
- **Wave Flanking:** When a wave hits a seawall the wave energy is also deflected sideways to neighboring property this is called wave flanking. This causes erosion on the neighbor's property where there might not have been any erosion. But now there is a problem. A domino effect of seawall installations is many times a result of wave flanking problems from a neighboring seawall.

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WINTER 2017

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The Gull Lake Quality Organization is an all-volunteer organization. Our mission is to address concerns and provide education regarding the use of natural resources of the Gull Lake Watershed.



Are Your Pets and Plants Invaders?

By Paige Filice, Graduate Research Assistant, Michigan State University

The movement of boats and fishing gear between lakes and rivers across Michigan is a leading cause of aquatic invasive species introduction and spread, but that is not the only way these pesky plants and animals enter waterbodies. Aquariums and backyard ponds are lesser known sources of exotic species. Aquarists and water gardeners sometimes release their unwanted pets and plants into the wild when they can no longer care for them, under the assumption they are making a humane decision. Unfortunately, most plants and animals sold in the aquarium and nursery trade are not native to Michigan, but are often quite hardy. This makes them ideal for aquariums and ponds, and excellent invaders if they are introduced to a natural waterbody.

What can you do to avoid introducing an invader to your lake? Take these tips from Michigan's RIPPLE program (Reduce Invasive Pet and PLant Escapes):



*Photo Credit: Sarah LeSage
Wild goldfish caught on the St. Joseph River in Michigan.*



Never release plants, animals, or water into a lake or stream. Instead, consider giving or trading unwanted organisms with another hobbyist, retailer, environmental learning center, aquarium or zoo. While some tropical animals and plants cannot tolerate Michigan's climate and may never become established, releasing them can introduce harmful disease.

When purchasing plants, carefully inspect and rinse them. It is common for other unwanted plant fragments, fish eggs, and snails to attach themselves to plant material. When maintaining your aquarium or pond be sure to dispose of plant material in a plastic bag in the trash, rather than composting. Plant seeds can remain viable even when composted. If you are installing a water garden, be sure to build it away from nearby waterways to prevent plants and animals from escaping during heavy rain events that cause flooding.

Michigan State University Extension and the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development developed RIPPLE to educate consumers and retailers in the aquarium and water garden industry about aquatic invasive species. Look for RIPPLE materials at local retailers that remind the public how to properly dispose their plants and animals. To learn more about the campaign and how you can support it, visit <http://bit.ly/miripple> or follow on Facebook at www.facebook.com/miripple.

***SHORELINE MANAGEMENT** continued*

- **Wildlife Barriers:** Seawalls are essentially vertical walls that are barriers for wildlife like turtles which cannot climb a vertical wall. Turtles need to come on land in order to lay their eggs. If they can't reach the land then they can't lay their eggs.

Even if you already have a seawall there are things you can do to help lessen the negative impacts seawalls have on lakes.

- 1) Replace an old and failing seawall with more natural solutions
- 2) Place rip-rap (four to nine inch stone) in front of a seawall which helps to reduce the wave energy thus reducing wave flanking and scour. Rip-rap can also create a slope for allowing animals to access the land and provide places for aquatic insects and plants to grow. **Note: placing rip-rap in front of your seawall requires a permit from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality.**
- 3) Plant into the rip rap.
- 4) Reduce your lawn and add native vegetation on the land.

Where to learn more?

<http://www.mishorelinepartnership.org/shoreline-resources>



KBS Offers Natural Shorelines for Inland Lakes

Date: Tuesday August 15 & Tuesday August 22

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Location: Kellogg Biological Station 3700 E Gull Lake Dr, Hickory Corners, MI 49060

Natural Shoreline for Inland Lakes: A Lakescaping Workshop for Lakefront Property Owners is a workshop for anyone interested in creating, restoring and managing natural shorelines and is designed to serve as a guide. We will learn about techniques for using natural landscaping along the shoreline for erosion control and creating habitat while maintaining the value of lakefront property. On August 15, there will be a classroom session followed by investigating four different natural shoreline designs. On August 22, we will observe natural shorelines around Gull Lake from a boat.

Workshop registration is \$50/person and includes a copy of the Natural Shoreline Landscapes on Michigan's Inland Lakes: Guidebook for Property Owners and \$25 for a second registration (no book included). The Natural Shoreline Landscapes publication can also be purchased from the MSUE Bookstore.

Registration coming soon!

WHY IS GULL LAKE BLUE?

Steve Hamilton, Kelloaa Biological Station

Have you ever wondered why deep, clear water bodies like Gull Lake appear blue?

Sunlight, like all white light, is actually composed of light of all the colors of the spectrum. You can see that when light passes through a prism and gets separated into its component colors. When we see something as a color other than white, that is because some parts of the light spectrum are absorbed and others are reflected to our eyes. A green leaf absorbs the other colors and reflects green light.

So it is with pure water—the colors of sunlight penetrating the water are selectively absorbed, but the blue component is “scattered” rather than absorbed, and thus the blue light coming back from the water is what we perceive with our eyes.

Of course water in lakes is often not very pure. Algae can make it green, and suspended sediment can make it brown or gray. In the case of Gull Lake, there is something else that determines its water color.

You may have noticed that Gull Lake often takes on a beautiful emerald or turquoise color for a few weeks in the early summer. Often people assume that is due to algae, but in Gull Lake it is mostly due to a mineral called calcium carbonate that precipitates out of the hard waters of the lake as they warm up. Eventually the precipitated mineral material settles out, which is the reason for the grayish or whitish marl sediments found in the deeper waters.

The effect of calcium carbonate crystals in the water confers a similar color to many tropical lagoons.

Appreciating our Natural Resources...Wintertime Fun



Dave Flook Ice Boating on Gull Lake.



Ice Fishing Cousins...Sisters Makenzee, Mylee Grimm with cousin Lydia Grimm.



Kay Gross and Gary Mittlebach and Friends Ice Skating on Little Long Lake.

Michigan Lake and Stream Association Annual Meeting



WHEN: Friday, April 21 and Saturday, April 22

WHERE: Crystal Mountain: <http://www.crystallmountain.com>

WHO: Many past attendees live on inland lakes and streams, some want to learn more about lakes, others are educators, some are service providers or are volunteers who participate in the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program. All care about the future quality of Michigan's inland lakes and streams.

WHAT: This year's conference will feature speakers and workshops that focus on issues and concerns about enjoying the quality of inland lakes and streams.

COST: \$195 pays for the two-day conference and includes 4 meals which includes the Friday night banquet

\$120 pays for Friday only and includes meals and the banquet

\$100 pays for Saturday only and includes two meals

Rooms are separate at \$119/\$139 plus tax

INFO: <http://www.mymlsa.org/2017-mlsa-annual-conference>

***GLQO NOTEPADS AND VINYL DECALS ARE
AVAILABLE AT
BEER & SKITTLES.***

***THEY ARE 2 for \$6 or \$3.50 each. MIX AND
MATCH. SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR GLQO!***



GULL LAKE QUALITY ORGANIZATION



**SUMMER
PARTY**

JOIN US! SUNDAY, JUNE 11 AT THE GULL LAKE COUNTRY CLUB

HOW DOES GULL LAKE SCORE?

*The Score the Shore Habitat Assessment was conducted on Gull Lake in 2016.**

This assessment involves rating 1000 foot sections of shoreline for aquatic vegetation, shoreline vegetation, erosion, and erosion control practices (like sea walls). Each shoreline section is given three scores ranging from 0-100 for the categories of Littoral, Riparian, and Erosion Management. The three scores are averaged to produce an average section score. Then a total score is given to the entire lake by averaging all of the average section scores. A score of 0 indicates a shoreline that has been extremely disturbed by human impacts and no natural shoreline remains. A score of 100 indicates a shoreline that is nearly pristine.

Gull Lake:

Number of Sections: 68

Number of Structures: 1612

Structure Density: 23.7

Final Score: 46

All 31 Participating Lakes in 2015 and 2016:

Number of Sections: 16 Average

Number of Structures: 233 Average

Structure Density: 14.6 Average

Final Score: 66

Analysis specific to Gull Lake:

Overall, the lakeshore habitat of Gull Lake is below average when compared to the other lakes in the program. The majority of the Gull Lake sections were scored as poor. (46 poor, 19 fair, 3 good).

The riparian zone was the weakest point in Gull Lake's score (scoring an average of 35). Improving this riparian zone will be the best way to improve overall lakeshore health; reduce the amount of mowed grass and increase the amount of unmowed vegetation along the lakeshore to boost this aspect of the shoreline habitat.

The average score for the littoral zone was 46 and the average score for erosion control was 57. Neither of these would be considered a good score.

* This report was provided through the Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program (CLMP) 2016 Report

An additional note from CLMP:

Score the Shore is a descriptive process for assessing shoreline quality on Michigan's inland lakes. It is also a valuable educational tool. Score the Shore is not a regulatory program, nor is it intended to tell people what they can and cannot do on their property. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's Inland Lakes and Streams Program has responsibility for shoreline protection on public lakes. To learn about their shoreline protection program, including construction permitting and recommendations for shoreline management, visit www.mi.gov/deqinlandlakes.

Creating a buffer zone by not mowing up to the shoreline helps to reduce run-off. Planting deep rooted native grasses and plants along the shoreline is preferred.



2017 FISHERIES UPDATE – RAINBOW TROUT

By Bryan J. Beck, Fisheries Committee

The GLQO recently spoke with the DNR and was pleased to learn of an exciting development related to the stocking program in Gull Lake. As you probably know, the lake historically supported a popular rainbow trout fishery with many fish larger than 10 pounds reported. The fishery declined in the 1990s. The decline appeared to be due to a combination of factors, including changes in water quality and increased competition for prey due to zebra mussel colonization and high rainbow trout stocking rates (average = 11 fish/acre during 1979-1996). Low density stocking (2/acre) of rainbow trout did not produce an acceptable fishery during the late 1990s-early 2000s, and the rainbow trout stocking program was discontinued in 2007.

We understand that in recent years, the DNR office in Plainwell had received requests to restore the rainbow trout fishery in Gull Lake. It looks like they will have a chance to accommodate these requests. Zebra mussel densities have declined and water quality has improved (for example, sampling in August 2013 indicated that water temperatures and oxygen concentrations were suitable for rainbow trout at depths of 31-67 ft.). In addition, research conducted on other inland lakes has shown that Michigan strain steelhead (a strain of rainbow trout that have been naturally reproducing in Michigan streams for decades) exhibit higher survival and better return to anglers than the Eagle Lake strain of rainbow trout that were stocked in Gull Lake during 1992-2006. Until this year, all steelhead were allocated to the Great Lakes (with the exception of the fish used in the aforementioned study) and the DNR could not get any of these fish for southwest Michigan lakes. Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery has found a way to produce approximately 37,000 yearling steelhead for inland stocking and the DNR was able to secure 10,000 of these fish (5/acre) for annual stocking in Gull Lake.

Angler reports suggest that the adult lake trout stocking is yielding results. Based on the available information, survival of yearling lake trout seems to be low. During the first two years of life, lake trout grow more slowly than rainbow trout and take longer to reach a size at which they are less vulnerable to predation (e.g., by northern pike). Thus, if zooplankton and other prey are common, rainbow trout have a competitive advantage over lake trout.

For the next several years, our understanding from the DNR is that they plan to utilize the following management program for Gull Lake:

1. Continue to stock adult lake trout. They do not get these fish every year. The frequency of stocking is dependent on the availability of fish from the Marquette State Fish Hatchery and federal hatcheries. The maximum stocking level in any year would be 500 fish (0.25/acre). In most instances, the actual stocking number is closer to 200 fish.
2. Discontinue annual stocking of yearling lake trout.
3. Annually stock 10,000 Michigan strain steelhead yearlings in Gull Lake. Stocking is expected to occur during the first half of May.



Rainbow Trout

2017 FISHERIES UPDATE continued

As with any stocking change on Gull Lake, there were questions surrounding the potential effects on the smelt population. The expectation is that the proposed change will not negatively affect the smelt population for the following reasons. (1) Rainbow trout are more flexible in their diet than lake trout. Whereas lake trout primarily eat fish, rainbow trout eat a mixture of zooplankton, insects, and fish. (2) The proposed stocking density is less than half of the average rainbow trout stocking density during 1979-1996. On top of the rainbow trout stocking, lake trout also were stocked in 1979-1984 and Atlantic salmon were stocked during 1986-1992. (3) Very few rainbow trout live longer than 5 years. By contrast lake trout can live longer than 25 years. Thus, at comparable harvest and stocking rates, the population density of lake trout in a system could be much higher than the population density of short-lived rainbow trout. (4) Higgins Lake supports a strong smelt fishery. The combined stocking density for Higgins Lake is 7.3 yearlings/acre (4.4 – lake trout and 2.9 –rainbow trout).

**Note: The above information and data were provided by the DNR.*

**The complete Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program reports for
Little Long Lake and Gull Lake are available at glqo.net.**

Thanks to volunteers Susan Houseman, Mike Gallagher, Ed McCarty, Gary Mittlebach and Kay Gross for their lake monitoring this past summer.



Little Long Lake Secchi Disk Transparency (feet)

Year	#Readings	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Std. Dev	Carlson TSI*
2015	10	12.5	30.5	17.2	5.3	36
2010-2014	58	6.5	27.5	15.0	4.2	38
2009-2009	15	12.0	22.0	15.7	2.5	37

Gull Lake Secchi Disk Transparency (feet)

Year	#Readings	Minimum	Maximum	Average	Std. Dev	Carlson TSI*
2016	17	7.5	35.0	15.7	8.2	37
2011-2015	83	7.0	33.0	15.3	6.6	38
2009-2010	45	6.5	36.5	19.3	9.3	35
2016						
All CLMP Lakes	3116	1.0	56.0	12.9	2.8	41

*Carlson uses the measurements of clarity, chlorophyll a and total phosphorus as the primary determinants of a body of water's trophic state index (TSI) and is used to make a rough estimate of its biological condition. The trophic state is defined as the total weight of living biological organisms in a given area.

COMING SOON! PRAIRIEVILLE PARK BOAT WASH STATION

By Mike Gallagher

The second boat wash station in the area will be constructed this spring at the Prairieville Park at Gull Lake. Prairieville Township and many volunteers from the Upper Crooked Lake area led the way last summer in installing the first boat wash in southwest Michigan. Thanks to them, the five harmful invasive weeds in Upper Crooked Lake will not hitchhike a ride from that lake to other lakes on a boat or trailer. The Gull Lake boat wash will be a big deterrent to the transfer of zebra mussels from Gull Lake to other lakes and boats cleaned before entering Gull will also help maintain the lakes quality.

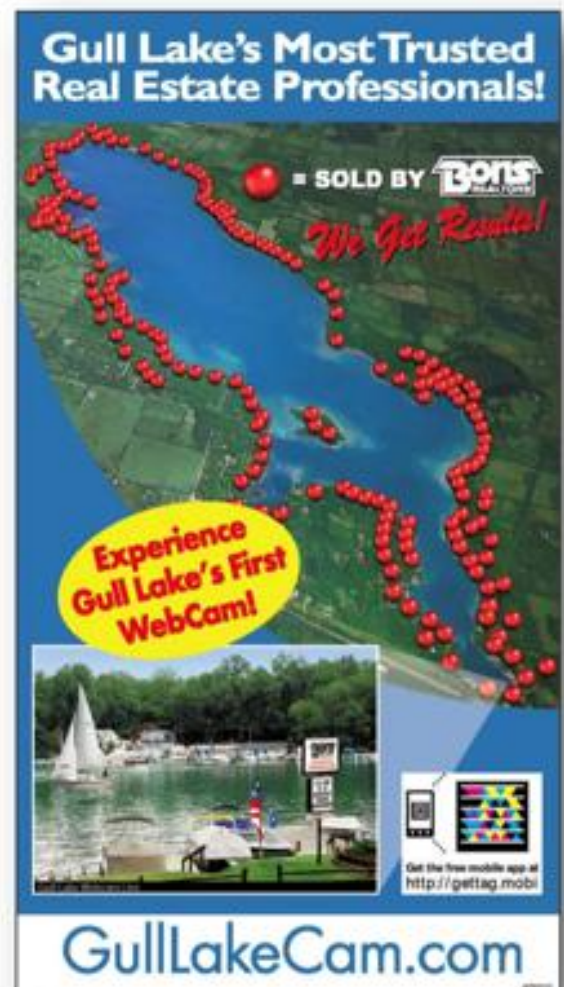
The GLQO will assist the township by overseeing the project with construction beginning in early April and completing in mid May. Local riparian and architect, Rick King, is to be thanked for his work on designing the layout of the wash stations. Donations from many local residents and funds from Prairieville Township and the Gull Lake Quality Organization are making this project possible.

A township ordinance enacted last year requires boaters to have their boat washed if it does not pass a mandatory inspection prior to launching. The two boat wash stations will have trained township employees inspecting boats as they enter and washing them if necessary. Those two stations plus a third will be used to wash all boats before they leave the park. The folks at Upper Crooked Lake have found that it takes around five minutes to wash a boat. Boaters will quickly learn that arriving with a clean boat will get them into the lake faster!

With jobs like connecting to the sewer, curb demolition, concrete finishing, excavation and electrical work, many skilled trades will be involved. Upper Crooked Lake was able to install their wash station for a fraction of the true cost thanks to the donated labor of many skilled volunteers in the area. The GLQO hopes that we have the same success when we ask for help.

By mid-May the township plans to have a team of trained part-time employees ready to inspect and wash boats and trailers while educating boaters who are about to enjoy Gull Lake. If you are a good communicator who can handle a pressure washer and enjoy the sunshine from May into October keep an eye on our website for how to apply for a job. The website also has the plan layout of Prairieville Park at Gull Lake www.glqo.net.

Prairieville Township is also working with the DNR to repair/replace the existing deteriorating 30-plus year old boat ramp.



*We thank the
2017 GLQO
Corporate Members*

Abigail Hayden Interior Design, LLC
Bell Tower Lake House Living Company
Don Wood Company
Gull Lake Country Club
Mac's Garage, LLC

Banner Beachfront Equipment
Boris Realtors
Hawks Hollow Builders
Ice House, LLC
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We thank the 2017 GLQO Individual and Family Members

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Martha Parfet	Jon and Carolyn Schutte	Daniel and Gail Turluck	Marsha and Bob Zick

Every effort is being made to report members' names as you have requested.

Some members have requested to remain anonymous. If you see an error, please e-mail info@glqo.net.

If you wish to make a contribution to Marine Safety, Kalamazoo County Sheriff 's Office,
it is best to do so directly by mailing your donation directly to
1500 Lamont Ave, Kalamazoo, MI 49048. Attention: Todd Meyers. Thank You!!!

***GLQO gratefully acknowledges the Richland Area
Community Center for inviting us to hold our
regular board meetings there!***



The Gull Lake Quality Organization

P.O. Box 34 / Hickory Corners, Michigan / 49060

Website: glqo.net

Contact: info@glqo.net **Error! Bookmark not defined.**



Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 11th at 7:30 pm
Dessert with Discussion
Dr. Jo Latimore – Aquatic Invasive Species
Kellogg Biological Station

Friday, April 21 and Saturday, April 22
Michigan Lake and Stream Association
Annual Meeting
Crystal Mountain

Tuesday, May 2nd at 7:00 p.m.
GLQO Board Meeting
Richland Area Community Center

Sunday, June 11th
Welcome to Summer Party
Gull Lake Country Club

2016-2017 Board of Directors

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Vicki Gesmundo Marcinek **(17-1)**
Vice-President
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Secretary
Don Paulson **(17-1)**
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Pete Hawk **(19-2)**
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Tim Richardson **(19-2)**
Drew Worgess **(17-2)**

*GLQO by-laws allow volunteers to serve as directors for two consecutive three-year terms. After each Director's name are two numbers: the **year** their current term expires, and the **number** of the current term.*

We welcome you to volunteer for committee work (of your choice) and to participate in our board meetings.

The Gull Lake Watershed includes Gull Lake, Little Long Lake, Grassy Lake, Little Gull Lake, Miller Lake, Bullhead Lake, Duck Lake, Backus Lake, Dake Lake, Elliston Lake, Mud Lake, Wintergreen Lake, and Prairieville Creek.