

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.

FISH AGING 101

*By Dennis Tar
Michigan Department of Natural Resources*

When we survey a lake, we look at the number of fish caught, the catch rate, and the size of fish in the catch to evaluate the fish community. However, size alone can be misleading. For example, a three-year-old walleye that is 15 inches long indicates good growth rates, but a six-year-old walleye that is 15 inches has experienced poor growth rate. So, we do not just look at the size of fish in the catch, but we look at “length-at-age.” Because fish are cold-blooded, they grow faster in the summer and slower in the winter. Because of this, they lay down rings in their bony structures indicating slow growth periods – comparable to the growth rings on the cross-section of a tree trunk. It was common in the past to collect a sample of fish scales to count growth rings to age fish. In more recent years, cross-sections of spines in the fins have been shown to be easier to read and more accurate, especially in older fish. It is standard procedure to collect scales and spines on a sub-sample of fish during a survey. Side cutters are used to snip the first 3-4 spines from the dorsal or anal fin. The spines are allowed to air dry and then stored.

When field activities slow down during the winter months, technicians analyze the scale and spine samples collected during the field season. A rotary cutting tool is used to slice a small cross-section at the base of the spine. The cross-section is then placed under a dissecting microscope and illuminated. The rings are counted to determine the fish’s age. The age is then recorded along with the length of the individual fish. It is then easy to compare the length-at-age against a statewide average to determine how fast a fish is growing.

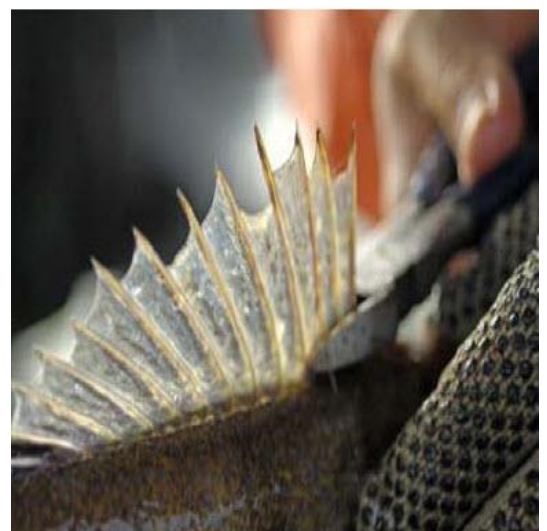
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SPRING 2018

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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.



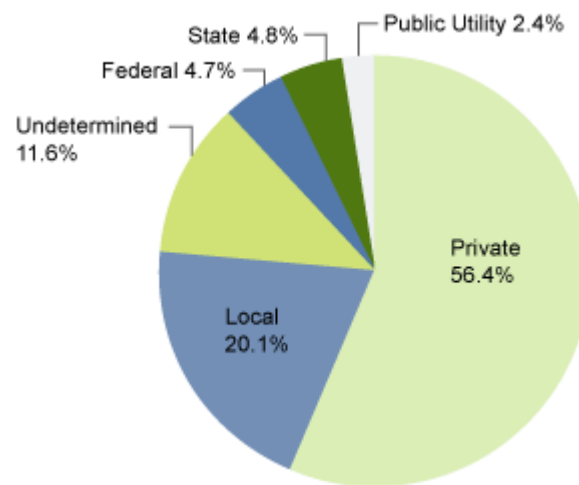
The first three or four spines from the dorsal fin are clipped at the base using side cutters.

GULL LAKE DAM... Do You Take It For Granted?

By David Halley, Past GLQO Board Member

Think about it. Do you take it for granted that riparians on Gull Lake experience predictable water levels season to season and year to year? Can you explain why? I bet some of your neighbors are not able to do so. We that do have this knowledge need to inform and educate our neighbors about the Gull Lake Association (not to be confused with the GLQO) and advocate for their involvement in supporting this key component to our water quality and property values.

Infrastructure such as roads, bridges and sewer systems are commonly owned by public entities. The majority of dams in the United States, however, are privately owned.



www.fema.gov

Such is the case of the earthen Gull Lake Dam (Yorkville Dam) maintaining Gull Lake water levels. The Gull Lake Association has owned and operated the dam at the Gull Lake outlet adjacent to DE Avenue since 1921. Their sole purpose is to own, maintain and regulate water levels on Gull Lake. If you have driven by Pine Lake or any number of other South West Michigan inland lakes in recent weeks you will have noticed high water levels lapping against docks and beaches. We are very fortunate that our dam gives us highly reliable water levels which are repeatable to a few inches from season to season.

Recent correspondence with Bill English from the Gull Lake Association indicates water levels have been higher than usual this past fall and winter. The larger of two flood gates typically used to regulate water levels has been open since last fall and despite this, the water level did not get to its typical winter low.

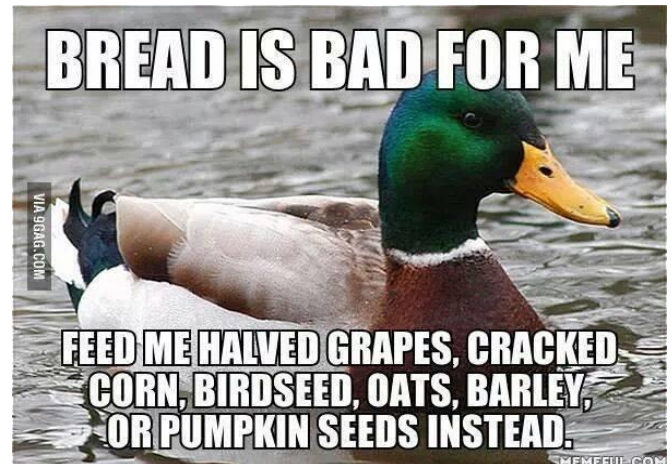
Please check out the Gull Lake Association website, gulllakedam.com for more information and how you can become a member. The Gull Lake Association also continues to look for volunteers to take on leadership roles. They welcome your inquiry at GullLakeDam@gmail.com.

Don't Feed the Ducks!

By Gary Mittelbach, Vice President

As the picture to the right notes, if you feed ducks, please don't feed them bread (or other carbohydrate-rich foods such as crackers, chips, donuts, cereal and popcorn). Why? The simple answer is that these foods have little nutritional value for ducks or other waterfowl. Bread simply fills them up without providing any nourishment. This can have detrimental effects. The picture lists some healthier duck foods and you can click on this link to learn more:

<https://www.thespruce.com/is-feeding-ducks-bread-bad-386564>.



Even better advice might be, please don't feed the ducks, period! Or if you do, please consider the following. Feeding waterfowl on your lakefront has two potentially bad consequences for you and for the lake. 1) It adds nutrients to the lake, which can lead to an increase in unwanted algae and other nuisance plant growth (ducks and geese poop a lot!). 2) Waterfowl are hosts for the parasite that causes swimmer's itch (those red, itchy welts that can show up on your body after you swim in the lake). Those red welts are caused by the larvae of a flatworm whose adult stage lives in ducks and other waterfowl (the parasite does not live in people, so don't worry about that). But having a lot of ducks and geese near where you go swimming can definitely increase your chances of getting a case of swimmer's itch during the summer. Read more about swimmer's itch in the 2016 Summer GLQO newsletter on our website: <http://glqo.net/newsletters/>.

Bottom line - if you enjoy feeding the ducks (or geese, or swans), then please follow these simple guidelines:

- 1) feed them nutritious foods (not bread) and
- 2) do so in moderation.

Join GLQO To Celebrate the Summer!



Join us at the Gull Lake Country Club on **Sunday, June 3rd from 5:30 to 8:30 pm**. It's where friends and supporters of GLQO will be gathering! Enjoy a Barbeque Buffet and learn more about "Aging Fish" and so much more! Tickets are available from GLQO Board Members at Serafino's or Beer and Skittles and at the door!

MEMBER BENEFIT...JOIN US AT 12267 E D AVENUE!

GLQO invites its members to stop by the AVB built parade home on **Sunday, June 10th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Food and drink will be provided and you can roam around the newly built AVB Parade Home. AVB has also graciously offered to match any money raised at this event. (Up to \$2,500).
Not Yet A Member? Great news. You can join that day!

WHERE ARE THE SMELT?

By Bryan Beck, Fisheries Committee Chairperson

Reports from anglers on Gull Lake this past winter reinforced the concerns surrounding the lake's smelt population. The feedback was unambiguous. The smelt fishing was poor. As reported back in June of 2016, Gull Lake experienced a large smelt die-off. At the time, the DNR concluded that thermal stress was the primary factor in the die-off as the kill coincided with the first hot weather period of the summer. The smelt had no hemorrhages or visible signs of disease, and no pollutant releases were reported. Most of the dead smelt were similar in size and presumably were schooling together in the same type of habitat. While much of the lake remained cool (especially the deep water), schools of smelt were likely trapped in bays or other localized patches of warm water. Smelt are less tolerant of increases in temperature than most other fish species, and only very few dead fish of other species were observed during the 2016 die-off.



There is some concern among smelt anglers that too many predators on the lake may be causing the decrease in smelt numbers. This is an important concern and merits inquiry. One place to look for guidance is Gull Lake's history. Based upon the DNR's records, there was a large smelt die-off on Gull Lake back in the late 1970's. Water quality at the time had declined prior to the completion of the sewer system in 1983, and the smelt had virtually disappeared prior to the introduction of Atlantic salmon in the lake in 1986. It is possible that the stocking of Atlantic salmon in the lake during the late 1980's hindered the recovery of the smelt population, however, what is clear is that the smelt numbers heavily rebounded during the late 1990's-early 2000's when roughly 15,000 brown and rainbow trout were being stocked each year. By 2005, strong smelt spawning runs and ice fisheries were reported. Since that time, the number of trout stocked annually has been lower than it was during the period when the smelt population recovered. The DNR's current plan is to stock 10,000 yearling rainbow trout annually and to periodically stock low numbers of adult lake trout when available (maximum of 500 in a year).

Gull Lake's smelt fishery is a rare gem that should be protected. Issues such as predation can certainly have an impact and smelt populations are also very sensitive to rapid temperature changes, stream flows during spawning season, and plankton availability. Angler concerns regarding the smelt population have been heard by GLQO and have been voiced to the DNR. We understand that the DNR is giving particular consideration to the balance of trout stocking in the lake so as to minimize the predation risk. Gull Lake supported fisheries for smelt, lake trout, and rainbow trout during the 1950's-early 1970's, so it is known that these species can co-exist in the lake with the right balance. This spring, the DNR is monitoring the smelt spawning run in Prairieville Creek and there is hope that sufficient number remain to replenish the population without restocking. If the smelt population is not able to recover on its own, we understand that restocking initiatives may begin.

GLQO NOTES AND UPDATES

TIPS FOR "QUICK" BOAT WASHING

- Arrive with your bilge plug out.
- Prep your boat as staff wash it for you. Or, feel free to assist in washing.
- Clean weeds off your anchor and fishing gear.
- When you leave, pull all drain plugs and keep them out as you tow your boat. It will dry out any microscopic zebra mussels will die.

CLEAN - - - DRAIN - - - DRY

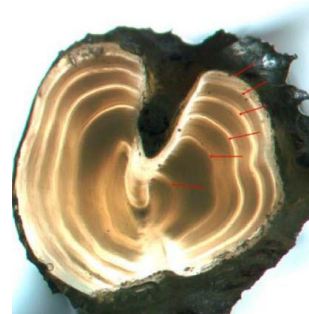
GLQO... BOAT WASH LAUNCHES SEASON 2



The boat wash station is up and running thanks to the efforts of GLQO board members Linda Shierlaw, John Etzcorn and Mike Gallagher. Special thanks to John Hoek, Parks Commission Chairperson, from Prairieville Township for coordinating the hiring and training of eight boat wash attendants. (Pictured above are newly hired township employees being trained to work at the boat washes.)

FISH AGING ON GULL LAKE

This summer, several fishermen on Gull Lake will be gathering spine samples from Northern Pike. They will provide the samples to the DNR to help determine the pikes' growth rates. In recent years, many fishermen have noticed an abundance of smaller pike. Thanks for your help!



Pictured is a cross-section showing spine rings.

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We thank the 2018 GLQO Individual and Family Members

Anonymous (13)	Jane Carpenter	Dan and Mary Beth Gallagher	Darrell and Kim Junkins
Heather Adams	Janet and John Carrig	John and Ann Gallagher	Bob and Val Karam
Donald and Becky Adamski	Richard and	Pat and Deb Gallagher	Mike Kasten
Ann and Gregg Agens	Joanne Chamberlin	Joni and Roger Ganger	John and Kathy Keagle
Scott and Holly Allen	John and Susan Chrisman	Chip and Miranda Garside	Michael Keenan
Steve Allen	David and Kathy Christ	Jay Garside	Richard Keilen
Mike and Lou Ann Ambro	Gary Cirulli	John and Sharon Garside	Steve Keith
Bud and Judi Baldwin	Dorne Clark	Judy and Jamie Geary	Brad and Lauren Keller
Jack Bargo	Wanda G. Clawson	Dawn Gershinzon	John E. Kelly
Anthony Bartalone	Linda Cohen	Jack S. Gesmundo	Dave and Karen Kempe
Barbara Brundage and	Bruce and Donna Cohen	Shahriar Ghoddousi	Mark Kemple
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David and Margaret Battjes	Stuart Verseman	Don and Janet Gladstone	Charles Kettles
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Bryan and Courtney Beck	Bob and Paula Cook	Bjorn and Lori Green	Fred and Pat Kinney
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Garry Harris and	Ken and Teri Davis	Stephen Hamilton	Shirley Kruger
Leigh Blackport	Philip and Terri Dawson	Pete and Margaret Hamlett	John and Martha Kuch
Dick and Debbie Boris	Jim and Barb DeKruyter	Kathy Hanson	Denise and Mark Lancaster
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Sharon Boudeman	Pam Dewey	Jeff Price and Sue Harrison	Jim and Linda Lass
Kappy Boudeman	Laurel and Mark Disney	Henry B. Hawk	Phyllis Lavene
David and Heide Boutell	John and Susan Doster	Pete and Jo Hawk	Patricia Lawrence
Jon and Susan Bowers	Donald and Jeree Drake	Jim and Marsha Heath	Joanne and John Lawrence
Robert and Dolores Boyle	Lisa J. Duffy	Rick and Shirley Hebert	Barbara and Rafael Ledesma
Brenda Brenner	Sid Durham	James and Patricia Heilenbach	Suzanne Leech
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John and Judi Brown	Wendy Field	Bruce Hutchinson	Joe and Madison Lukeman
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		Dorothy Jones	

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Dave Mitchell	Alison Pruitt	Julie Shaw	Roger and Jeanne Turner
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Robert and Kay O'Boyle	Dean Rock	James Stahl	Paul and Tiana Wang
Sean and Nicol O'Brien	Rob and Lori Rowe	Edward Sternaman	Donna and Dan Weaver
Amy and Jeff O'Brien	Bill and Jane Ryan	Carole Stevens	Weckler-Farwell
Tom and Charlene O'Neill	Brad and Rene Saar	Carolyn Stiles	Karen and Mark Weishaar
Jerry and Max Orum	Julia B. Sanger	Charles Stoddard	James Westcott
Craig and Sue Osborn	Tom and Judy Schau	Harry and Tineke Stolt	David and Cindy Wiedemer
Edward Overbeck	Dick and Jean Schmitt	William D. Johnston and Ronda E. Stryker	Brook and Emily Wilke
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Don and Ann Parfet	Robert Schuder	Gary and Karen Theisen	Bruce and Jeannie Williams
William and Barbara Parfet	Ken and Pat Schultz	Ron and Edna Thompson	David Wilson
Preston and Barbara Parish	Jon and Carolyn Schutte	David and Carol Ticknor	Brian and Teri Winne
Donald and Sue Paulson	Jim and Deb Scott	Bill and Carolyn Ticknor	Chris and Carie Wolters
Michael and Frances Peikert	Sam and Susan Sefton	Michelle and Chris Tracy	Tammy Woodhams
Karol Peterson	Tim and Judy Shank	Kevin Trayer	Doug and Jackie Wunderly
Stephen E. Pew and Kathleen M. Keelan Pew			

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.

We thank the 2018 GLQO Corporate Members

Abigail Hayden Interior Design, LLC

Bell Tower Lake House Living Co

Boris Realtors

Franklin Beach LLC

Gull Lake Country Club

Hawks Hollow Builders

Mac's Garage, LLC

Prairieville Township

Serafino's



***GLQO gratefully acknowledges Gull Lake
Ministries for inviting us to hold our
regular board meetings at their facilities!***

The Gull Lake Quality Organization

P.O. Box 144 / Richland, Michigan / 49083

Website: glqo.net

Contact: info@glqo.net



Upcoming Events

Welcome to Summer Party

Sunday, June 3, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.

Gull Lake Country Club

Members Only Event, or Your Invite "To Join" Event

Sunday, June 10, 2018 at 11:00 a.m.

Parade of Homes AVB Open House at 12267 E D Ave

Kanoe the Kazoo...An Excursion on Gull Lake

Wednesday, June 27, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.

Prairieville Township Launch

Reserve at <https://kalamazooriver.org/events/>

GLQO Annual Meeting

Tuesday, August 7, 2018

Social: 6:30 p.m. Meeting 7:30 p.m.

Kellogg Manor House

2017-2018 Board of Directors

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Gary Mittelbach (20-1)

Vice President

Jim Collier (19-2)

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Don Paulson (20-2)

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Kai Free (18-1)

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Joe Lukeman (20-1)

Steve Keith (20-1)

Robert Phillips (19-1)

Gregg Pierce (20-1)

Linda Shierlaw (19-1)

Brook Wilke (20-1)

*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.
