

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.



An Odd Denizen of Gull Lake – The Mudpuppy

By Gary Mittelbach

Dateline: July 2020, Wildwood Beach, Gull Lake. Three dead mudpuppies found washed up on the shore. Cause unknown.

What is a mudpuppy you ask? And what is it doing in Gull Lake?

Well, mudpuppies turn out to be rather interesting critters. Unlike most Michigan salamanders, mudpuppies spend their entire lives in the water (note their external gills in the picture to the right).

And, while these large salamanders (average 10-12 inches long) have a face only a mother could love, they are harmless to people. Mudpuppies can live 10 or 20 years, but because they are nocturnal, we rarely encounter them in the lake.

Like most Amphibians (salamanders, frogs and toads) they are very sensitive to environmental change and to pollutants. Mudpuppy populations are declining in many areas and they are listed as endangered or threatened in Canada, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Ohio. Researchers are working to understand the multiple causes of these declines.

If you have questions about mudpuppies or observations to report, you can contact the Michigan Herp Atlas at <https://www.miherpatlas.org/> or the mudpuppy conservation group at <https://www.facebook.com/MudpuppyConservation/>.

Summer 2020

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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.



“Score the Shore” Positive Changes

Reprinted with permission Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership

The loss of natural shorelines is the biggest threat to the overall health of Michigan Lakes.

The [National Lake Assessment](#) (NLA) results indicate that inland lakes across the nation need better care. Overall, the water quality in Michigan's inland lakes is really good. However, the Michigan results of the National Lake Assessment indicate that, ***lakeshore habitat and physical lakeshore complexity are major stressors*** for Michigan lakes with over 50% having poor lake habitat complexity. This means our lakes are losing too much natural vegetation both on the land and in the water.

Native plants along lake shores are in the right place from nature's perspective. If you look at a lake that has little to no development the shoreline will typically have three (3) tiers of vegetation:

- 1) *Trees (canopy)*
- 2) *Shrubs*
- 3) *Plants (in the lake and on the land)*

Did you know many of the things that you love about lake front living depend on natural vegetation? A healthy (natural) shoreline has a variety of trees, shrubs and plants. The plants are doing “work” by supporting a large variety of fish and wildlife. When lakeshore lots are developed, native trees, shrubs and plants are typically replaced by lawns, sometimes to the water's edge. Once the vegetation is gone the fish and wildlife lose their habitat. Each bird, frog, butterfly, fish, turtle have different requirements for food, nesting, raising their young and staying safe.



*It used to be a grass shoreline. (above)
And, now it's this! (right)*



Wildflowers (left) are in full bloom on the shoreline of Little Long Lake. All of these are native plants and almost all colonized naturally.



From spring to autumn, a variety of native plants bloom.



Basics of Natural Shorelines Erosion Control

What to do instead of seawalls when shorelines are eroding?

Native Plants

Vegetation native to Michigan is a critical component of all erosion control solutions. Plants should be a mix of flowers, grasses, sedges and even trees and shrubs. The plant selection can also be tailored to meet the desires of the landowner but the priority should be providing the best root structure for long term success.

Coir (Coconut fiber) Logs

Coir logs are rolled coconut fiber logs held together with twine woven from coconut material. They are typically placed at the toe of the shoreline but can be used in other parts of a stabilization technique as well. The goal is to have plants grow into the logs and create a strong root system that can withstand the erosive forces at the shoreline. The coconut fiber logs will eventually biodegrade. As the plants grow, their root structures naturally stabilize the shoreline.

Erosion Control Blankets

Erosion control blankets such as jute, coir (coconut husk fiber) and wood-fiber blankets can be a product used in natural shoreline projects. These are useful on slopes for holding the soil in place until plants become established.

Rock (also known as rip rap) can be used in shoreline erosion control techniques. This approach requires appropriately sized and placed rock. If designed appropriately the rock will become hidden creating an aesthetically pleasing shoreline and still providing erosion control. As with all techniques, plants should be used.

What if I already have a seawall?

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

- 1) Where practical and feasible replace an old and failing seawall with more natural solutions.
- 2) Place rip-rap 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.
- 3) Plant into the rip rap.
- 4) Reduce your lawn and add native vegetation on the land.



A complete list of native plants may be found at Michigan Shoreline Partnership.org



Coir Log being installed along a shoreline in Wildwood Park



Rip Rap is loose stone placed sloping down to the water.

Any construction at the shoreline including placing rip rap in front of a seawall does require a permit from the Michigan Department of Environment Great Lakes and Energy.

GLQO Board Update

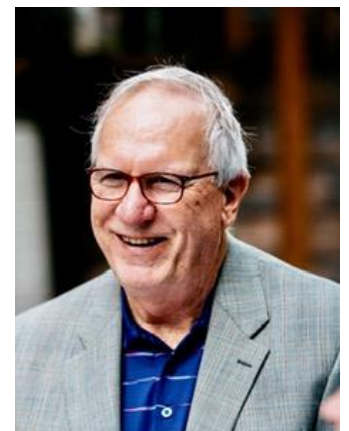
Please join the members of the GLQO Board in welcoming its incoming board members, Kay Gross and Rick Hebert! (pictured right)

Kay shared, "As a resident on Little Long Lake and former Director of the Kellogg Biological Station, I am looking forward to serving on the board of the GLQO and working with the community to foster a greater understanding of the importance of riparian areas for water quality and other natural resources in this area."

Rick expressed, "I look at the chance to serve on the GLQO board as an opportunity to give back to our Gull Lake community. My wife, Shirley and I have had the benefit of enjoying this wonderful natural resource since 1978. Stepping away from my career this past December, allows me time to devote to worthwhile volunteering opportunities like GLQO. "

The officers for 2020-2021 are Sera Gesmundo - president, Kay Gross - vice president, Joe Mauro - treasurer, Gary Mittelbach - secretary. Committee chairs are John Etzcorn - Water Quality, Joe Lukeman - Boater Safety, Linda Shierlaw and Margo Rebar - Membership and Communications and Brook Wilke - Fisheries. Other members of the board are Steve Keith, Dustin Perrin and Doug Smith.

We acknowledge and thank outgoing board members. Bryan Beck, Vicki Gesmundo, Kathy Gallagher, Mike Gallagher, Don Paulson and Gregg Pierce.



A Quick Review of the GLQO Budget

For the 12-month period ending 7/31/20 total revenue was \$35,069.43. This is down \$9,685.50 from the previous 12-month period. A change in when membership renewal requests* were sent out this year has affected the timing of the receipt of membership dues.

Operations expenses totaled \$4,639.92. This is down \$271.25 compared to the previous year's amount.

Program expenses** totaled \$18,691.36. This is down \$14,090.42 compared to the previous year's amount. A current outstanding bill for boat wash labor accrued will reduce this surplus in August by \$3,935.01.

Net Surplus equaled \$21,226.70. This is up \$14,164.72. compared to the previous year's amount.

*Renewal requests were mailed in January 2020. In previous years, they were mailed in October for the subsequent year.

** Program Expenses include aquatic vegetation survey, subsequent permitting and invasive species treatment and the boat wash.

GLQO Water Quality Update

A number of folks have asked if the waters of Gull Lake seem cloudier than normal this summer. In most years, water clarity in Gull Lake starts to decline in early July through the normal process of algae growth. This year, however, our measurements of water clarity (Secchi depth) showed very unclear water on June 29th, with a Secchi depth reading of only five feet. That was on a Monday after a very busy boating weekend which may have caused an increase in sediment suspended in the lake. The lake also warmed up quickly this summer and we have had plenty of sunshine. These two factors caused the aquatic plant growing season to get a quick start, which also causes more algae to be suspended in the water. Clarity tends to be better at the deepest part of the lake where we take our readings. That area is not affected by runoff or sediment being stirred up by boats in shallower areas. Boat traffic, especially from those capable of stirring up sediment from the bottom even at 15-foot depths, are having an impact on water clarity.

The following are Secchi Disk (pictured right) measurements from Gull Lake this summer are :

June 16, 2020 - 27 feet

June 29, 2020 - 5 feet

July 5, 2020 - 12.5 feet

July 14, 2020 - 9 feet

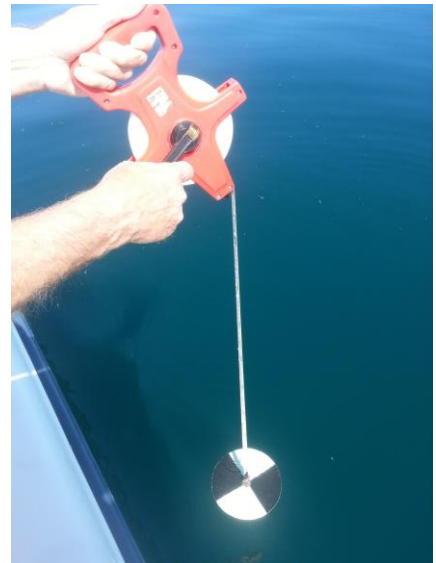
August 7, 2020 - 8 feet

Clarity on Little Long Lake this summer is more stable with transparency measurements almost identical to the past few years. A measurement taken August 12 was 12 feet. It was 11.5 feet last year and 12 feet in 2018 for this same week. The whole annual trend line is very similar as well. The biggest difference in Little Long Lake this year is dissolved oxygen. It is much higher at deeper levels than in previous years.

Did You Know? *It is estimated that an aluminum can may take up to 200 years to decompose? A styrofoam cup, possibly up to 50 years? A plastic bottle, approximately 450 years? Please take care to not toss items overboard.*



Junior Scientist, Conor, monitors the water quality with Mike.



GLQO . . . A Membership Reminder

Thanks to all who have supported the Gull Lake Quality Organization through your membership dues. Dues are the sole resource to support our initiatives such as monitoring water quality, providing early aquatic invasive species remediation when needed, supporting prevention through the boat wash station and educating riparians and visitors.

Currently, we have 361 members which includes 13 “lifetime” members. We are deeply appreciative of all of the members who value this incredible natural resource. Encourage your friends and neighbors to join GLQO at glqo.net.

Boater Safety Reminders

Did You Know the Speed Limit?

“GULL LAKE - R281.739.9 - Watercraft speed limit.

On the waters of Gull lake, sections 1, 2, and 12, T1S, R10W, Richland township, and sections 6, 7, 8, 17, 18, and 20, T1S, R9W, Ross township, Kalamazoo county, it is unlawful at any time to operate a vessel at a speed in excess of 40 miles per hour (64 kilometers per hour). (See R281.708.10 covering that portion of Gull lake which lies in Barry county.)

On the waters of Gull lake, section 36, T1N, R10W, Prairieville township, and section 31, T1N, R9W, Barry township, Barry county, it is unlawful at any time to operate a vessel at a speed in excess of 40 miles per hour (64 kilometers per hour.) (See R281.739.9 covering that portion of Gull lake which lies in Kalamazoo county.)”

from the Department of Natural Resources

From the Water Sports Industry Association:

The WSIA launched its Wake Responsibly Initiative in 2017. “The Wake Responsibly initiative is part of the WSIA’s waterway protection efforts to minimize threats to lakes and rivers regarding towed water sports and to preserve the vitality of wake sports for years to come. The organization is focused on promoting and protecting all towed water sports through best practices, maintaining waterway access rights, educating participants, promoting safety and facilitating sustainable industry growth.”

WAKE RESPONSIBLY

- 1 Stay at least 200 feet away**
from the shoreline, docks, or other structures.
- 2 Keep music at reasonable levels.**
Sound travels well over water. If it's loud enough to hear at 80 feet back, it is likely loud enough for homeowners to hear, too.
- 3 Minimize repetitive passes**
on any one portion of shoreline. Once you've run the same line for a while, move on to another area.

REMEMBER, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN WAKE.



Michigan Inland Lakes Partnership Convention Goes Virtual

The Michigan Inland Lakes Convention takes place every two years, and serves lake enthusiasts, researchers, managers, and educators. The Convention is hosted by the Michigan Inland Lakes Partnership, a collaboration of diverse organizations with a common mission to advance stewardship of Michigan's inland lakes. We invite you to join us online, **September 16-18**, to learn and share the latest innovations and ideas in lake stewardship, and to network with others who share your passion for lakes! This year's theme is "Conserving Lakes in a Changing Environment".



Registration is open! Registration fees are dramatically reduced relative to a face-to-face event: \$30 all-inclusive for 3 days, \$15 for speakers, and FREE for students! These nominal registration fees will support technical and administrative costs and cover student participation. **Registration deadline: September 11.**

UM Wake Study of Recreational Boats Planned

Excerpts reprinted from Minnesota Public Radio

"University of Minnesota researchers plan to launch a study this fall of wakes created by recreational boats, hoping to provide insight into their impact on Minnesota lakes and shorelines.

The U of M's St. Anthony Falls Laboratory plans to measure the height and energy of waves generated by wakesurfing boats and other large watercraft, as well as the turbulence created by propellers, said Jeffrey Marr, the lab's associate director of engineering and facilities."

"Their large size and powerful motors have raised concerns among some lake advocates, who worry they're eroding shorelines and disturbing sediment and aquatic plants on the lake bottoms.

The university researchers will use a variety of sensors and cameras above and below the water surface to collect data as they operate a test boat under different conditions, lake depths and distances from shore."

"While wake boats have generated headlines recently, Marr said the study won't focus exclusively on them, but will also include fishing boats, ski boats and pontoons. "



*Thanks to the families who are enjoying wakeboarding while respecting the ecology of the lakes. By participating in this recreational activity **in the middle of the lake**, you are helping to minimize the environmental and ecological impact.*

The Dam at Gull Lake – An Update

By Jeff Price, GLDA

The Gull Lake Dam Association has met its fundraising goal!

Because of the concern & generosity of the Gull Lake Community:

- * we will continue to have dam-controlled lake levels
- * we will be assured of maintaining our property values
- * we will continue to provide recreation & fishing opportunities
- * we will continue to provide economic support to our local businesses via a vibrant, beautiful lake

To everyone who contributed to this project – Thank You for your encouragement and financial support!

The dam will be reconstructed by Riverworks Construction, Inc., Holland, Michigan. The project will be managed by Prein & Newhof, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

We had a virtual pre-construction meeting with the engineers & construction contractor on July 28, 2020. The project is scheduled to begin shortly after Labor Day of 2020.

We will post progress of the project on the GLDA website, our Facebook page and via e-mail.

Ross Township Park Transformation

By Donna Tellam

The progress at the Ross Township Park continues and soon you will see very visible results.

Between the “Playground Project” and Covid-19, this summer has been a busier than usual at Ross Township Park. Following COVID-19 guidelines for the State of Michigan, parking is limited to 30 cars at a time. Yet the park remained open everyday

Some of the progress is not so visible. The park’s whole sewer line had to be replaced. That led the way for all of the restroom fixtures to be replaced. A great update for the park!

All new cement parking stops have been added.

A **very** generous resident donated a “Made in USA” regulation volleyball set! ***It is getting a lot of play time!***

Continued on Page 9



Ross Township Park Transformation *(Continued)*

The playground equipment was ordered on July 1. The estimated arrival time is the end of August. The week prior will be a busy one getting the ground prepared and the landscape timbers installed. The Gull Lake Area Rotary Club is ready to get to work as are our other volunteers!

Two Eagle Scout Projects are on schedule as well. The Little Library House and one new park bench will be installed. The scout also cleared the remainder of woods and added bark chipped trails for exploring. The scout's troop also planted a bed of flowers throughout the trails.

The scouts will be installing other benches in the park. Anyone wishing to purchase a Memorial Bench (two styles to choose from) can do so by contacting Ross Township Office at 731-4888.



39 Inch pike caught and released by Spencer Stiles.

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LOCATED ON THE BAY AT GULL LAKE

We thank the 2020 GLQO Individual and Family Members

Anonymous - 10	Gary and Marianne Caron	Jack and Patti Fleming	Robert and Amy Isom
Donald Adamski	Janet and John Carrig	Rick and Pam Foster	Phil and Carey Isom
Scott and Holly Allen	Richard and Joanne Chamberlin	Kai Free	Fred and Megan James
Mike and Lou Ann Ambro	Lynne Chipman	Mr. James Gorka and	Bill and Joanne Jellison
Charlotte Ashton	John and Susan Chrisman	Dr. Deborah Frett	John and Judith Jereck
Bud and Judi Baldwin	David and Kathy Christ	Mike and Kathy Gallagher	Diane and Brooke Johnson
Jack Bargo and Patti Colasanti	Gary J. Cirulli	Pat and Deb Gallagher	Steve and Peggy Johnson
Jennifer and Rebecca Barlow	Jack Clark	Tom and Mary Jo Gallagher	Si and Shirley Johnson
Anthony Bartalone	Wanda G. Clawson	John and Ann Gallagher	Susanne Johnston
Barbara Brundage and	Bonnie Cleasby	Dan and Mary Beth Gallagher	Courtney Jones
Bill Barton, Jr.	Linda Cohen	Joni and Roger Ganger	James Clark and
Lois Battilana	Jim Collier and Stuart Verseman	James Garside	Courtney Jones
David Battjes	Bob and Paula Cook	John and Sharon Garside	Michael Keenan
Rick and Kathy Beauregard	Alison and Rob Credit	John Garside, Jr	Richard and Joan Keilen
Bryan and Courtney Beck	David Creguer	Judy and Jamie Geary	Steve and Michalina Keith
Mac and Susan Behnke	Sally and Randy Crockett	Andrew and Kendra Geeslin	John E. Kelly
Lynn and Tom Belco	James A. Cupper	Karen Geib	Dave and Karen Kempe
Margie and Bob Berres	Jim and Diann Danhoff	Dawn Gershinzon	Sue Markus and Rick King
Dr. Kevin and Mary Beyer	Ken and Teri Davis	Judah Gesmundo	Todd Kingma and
Charles Bininger	Philip and Terri Dawson	Jack S. Gesmundo	Betsy Kingma
Gordon and Sally Birdsall	Jim and Barb DeKruyter	Vicki Gesmundo and Mike Marcinek	Fred and Pat Kinney
Jeffrey Bither	Greg and Mandy Deleeuw	Elizabeth Getz	Joni and Tim Knapper
Garry Harris and Leigh Blackpor	Al and Lisa DeLucia	Steve and Elaine Ginsberg	Wes and Susan Kolb
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Dick and Debbie Boris	Pam Dewey	Gary and Pam Granger	Garry and Claire Krouse
Debbie Ball and Rod Borton	Laurel and Mark Disney	Joni Green	John and Martha Kuch
Sherwood and	Larry Dopp	Jim and Bonnie Grooters	Jane Kuckel
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Kappy Boudeman	Donald and Jeree Drake	David Gruss	Lang Family Properties
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Sharon Boudeman	Sid Durham	Gull Hills Tract Spring	Stephanie Larsen
David and Heide Boutell	Dr. David Dvorak	Channel Dock Assoc	Jim and Linda Lass
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		Jerry and Margaret Trepanier	Ron and Sonya Young

We thank the 2020 GLQO Corporate Members

Bell Tower Lake House Living Co
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Hawks Hollow Builders
Michigan Lawn Services, Inc.
Serafino's

Not Yet A Member? Join GLQO on-line at GLQO.net

Every effort is made to report member's names as you have requested. If you see an error, please email info@glqo.net.

The Gull Lake Quality Organization

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

Website: glqo.net

Contact: info@glqo.net



Upcoming Events

GLQO Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 15, 2020

Location: Virtual or Gull Lake Ministries

GLQO Board Meeting

Tuesday, November 10, 2020

Location: Virtual or Gull Lake Ministries

GLQO Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

Location: Virtual or Gull Lake Ministries

2020-2021 Board of Directors

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Margo Rebar (22-1)

Linda Shierlaw (22-2)

Doug Smith (23-1)

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*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.
