



# MICHIGAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

## January 2015

[www.mwai.org](http://www.mwai.org)

**MWA Mission Statement** "This corporation is formed to protect, preserve and promote the wise use of inland waters – lakes, streams, rivers, creeks and the waters and bottomlands of the state of Michigan.

### Presidents' Corner

By Bob Frye

Dear Individual Members and Lake Association Members.

Looking forward to 2015, your Michigan Waterfront Alliance is in stable financial health. We have the best Lobbying firm that we have ever had and we have an increase in the number of Lake Assoc. My wish as president is: To get the word out to the thousands of lake and river front property owners in the State of Michigan who do not belong, that their membership in the MWA could indeed not only protect their lake or stream but also protect their Riparian rights and is the best investment they could ever make to ensure the future of the waterfront lifestyle they have come to know and love.

As MWA continues to help pass legislation that helps fund the battle of controlling the spread of aquatic invasive species an old problem seems to be getting worse in many of Michigan's Lakes: Swimmers Itch

According to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality "Swimmer's Itch in Michigan" report, swimmers itch predates the logging era. There are over 600 articles published on the subject. The MDEQ report states that from the 1930s through the 1970s the Michigan Bureau of Water Management conducted a swimmer's itch control program annually from June to August. Currently the program is limited to providing technical bulletins and the issuance of permits to treat the waters for snail control. That program focused on the use of copper sulfate to control the snails that host part of the life cycle of the flat worm that burrows into the skin of swimmers. The other host in that flatworm life cycle is waterfowl. Extensive research on Higgins Lake and a number of other large lakes has shown that the Common Merganser duck is the duck of choice for the swimmers itch flatworm.

The swimmer's itch (SI) threat is so serious that representatives from Higgins Lake are leading efforts to bring together a partnership of lake associations (currently ten lakes, including Higgins and Leelanau) to focus on SI. The partnership is sharing best practices, working to quantify the economic impact of SI and developing a survey that will enable prompt reporting of cases of swimmer's itch to facilitate the gathering of data to determine the scope of the problem on the ten member lakes. For more information about the newly formed partnership contact Jim Vondale ([jvondale57@gmail.com](mailto:jvondale57@gmail.com)) or Ken Dennings ([ktdennings@charter.net](mailto:ktdennings@charter.net)). For more information about the survey contact Wayne Swallow ([wayneswallow@charter.net](mailto:wayneswallow@charter.net)).

MWA will be ready to help in any way it can and will keep all members posted on the progress of the Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership and other efforts to make swimming in our lakes itch less!

Sincerely,  
Bob Frye, President MWA  
[skibones@aol.com](mailto:skibones@aol.com)



## MWA Legislative Update – January 2015

With two weeks remaining in the 2015 "lame duck" session of the Legislature, legislative activity is fast and furious as Governor Snyder and legislators press for action on their individual priorities before the Legislature adjourned for the year on December 18<sup>th</sup>.

### Gas Tax

Late Thursday evening, the House passed Speaker Jase Bolger's (R-Marshall) transportation funding plan, which will shift sales tax dollars that currently fund schools and local government instead to the transportation budget gradually phasing out the sales tax on gasoline over six years, phasing in a roughly equivalent wholesale gas tax as a replacement for the current per-gallon gas tax, and then dedicating all tax paid at the pump to roads, resulting in roughly \$1 billion in additional road funding by the time the plan is in full effect.

The House Republicans' plan was a "revenue neutral" response to a significant gas tax increase the Senate passed before the Thanksgiving recess that left sales tax revenue for schools and local government alone and raised a similar amount of new road revenue simply by replacing the current per-gallon gas tax with increased tax revenue from a wholesale gas tax rate phased in over four years to 15.5%.

The main bill in the House package, HB 4539, will reduce the sales tax on gasoline 1 percent each year from 2016 to 2020, and passed by a vote of 56-53, with Republicans voting in favor and all Democrats joining Republicans Bob Genetski (R-Sagatuck), Dave Pagel (R-Berrien Springs), and Paul Muxlow (R-Brown City) in voting no. Eventually, the sales tax on gas would be eliminated and the new wholesale gas tax rate would be 13.5%, resulting in the following scenario:

- Road funding would significantly increase,
- Sales tax revenue to schools and local government would significantly decrease,
- Drivers would not notice much of a difference in the overall price at the pump, and
- All taxes paid by drives at the pump would go to roads

In an effort to address school district and local government funding concerns from elimination of the sales tax on gasoline, HB 4539 includes language stating that, if overall state appropriations for schools or local government are reduced from the previous budget year during the phase-out, the sales tax would be reinstated. The real-world effect of this change implies that, if a future Legislature enacts and the Governor signs a budget reducing school funding over the previous year, the sales tax automatically is reinstated. In other words, under the House proposal, an enacted legislative cut to school funding would trigger an automatic sales tax increase.

The Speaker believes that projected future growth in overall sales tax revenue will provide more than enough money to prevent any cuts to school or local government funding. However, the new version of the bill was only made public 15 minutes before legislators voted, and school and local government groups are voicing opposition to the approach.

The House and Senate will need to find middle ground over the next two weeks on a road funding package that not only has enough votes to pass each chamber, but in a form Governor Snyder agrees to as well.

An analysis of the Senate-passed package is available here:

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2013-2014/billanalysis/Senate/pdf/2013-SFA-5477-U.pdf>

(For review of other watershed legislative matters, see our web site - <http://www.mwai.org/> )

### **MICHIGAN chapter NORTH AMERICAN LAKE MANAGEMENT SOCIETY**

McNALMS includes members from state, federal and local agencies as well as professionals working in limnology, biology, fisheries, recreation, and engineering. The Chapter provides a unique opportunity for individuals, groups and lake advocates to come together to achieve shared lake protection and restoration objectives.

Focusing on inland lakes, McNALMS is an affiliate member of the North American Lake Management Society, an international society. Through this affiliation, McNALMS is able to draw on the expertise of scientists, engineers, policymakers, and citizens from throughout the world.

#### **McNALMS**

- Provides articles on Lake Management (water quality, aquatic plants, fish, exotic species and other topics.)
- Encourages cooperation and interaction among lake and watershed managers to address problems impacting Michigan's lakes.
- Promotes the sharing of information and experiences on scientific, financial, administrative, legal, and legislative aspects of lake and watershed management and policy and legislation influence.
- Fosters the development of lake restoration and protection programs at local, state, and national levels.
- Provides education through our web site, newsletters, and an Annual Fall Conference.
- Provides a forum for citizens and managers to share ideas and promote common objectives

**Dues are \$25 for an Individual Member, \$50 for a Lake Board /Association/Non-profit membership,  
\$100 for a Corporation membership**

For more information and/or a membership application, visit us at [www.mcnalms.org](http://www.mcnalms.org)

### **Michigan Lake and Stream Associations**

News and Views for Winter of 2015

By Scott Brown, ML&SA Executive Director

### **Save the Dates!**

### **Michigan Lake and Stream Associations 54th Annual Conference**

**When: Friday and Saturday, May 1st & 2nd, 2015**

**Where: Boyne Mountain Resort, Boyne Falls, Michigan**

The 54th Annual Conference will be highlighted by workshops, seminars and special sessions dedicated to learning about the latest strategies and technologies for the management and control of aquatic invasive species. Are you interested in learning about the latest technologies designed to control and/or eradicate zebra and quagga mussels or the latest strategies for controlling Eurasian Water Milfoil and hybrid milfoil, if the answer is yes, than plan on being at our 54th Annual Conference!

Michigan Lake and Stream Associations and the Michigan Waterfront Alliance are presently focused on an on-going issue of great importance to folks living on inland lakes - drastically increasing the state revenue appropriation dedicated to effectively managing and controlling exotic aquatic invasive species, specifically, we seek the creation of a state funded inland lake aquatic invasive species management program that will serve to lighten the financial burden currently being shouldered entirely by lake associations and folks living on Michigan's inland lakes. Ask yourself this question - why should those living on inland lakes pay the entire cost of funding aquatic invasive species control in Michigan? Through self-imposed Special Assessment Districts, that is exactly what has been occurring in Michigan for over sixty years! You and your lakefront neighbors have generously agreed, decade after decade, to shoulder the entire cost of maintaining the health of our inland lake ecosystems in the face of a massive invasion of exotic aquatic plants, while your fellow citizens within the region who directly benefit from





**Subscribe to The Michigan Riparian  
Just \$14 per year!**

Please fill out the form, and mail it with your  
\$14 check made payable to:  
"The Michigan Riparian" ....

Mail to: The Michigan Riparian  
300 N. State St.  
Stanton, MI 48888

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address/PO Box \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

May 2014

**MICHIGAN WATERFRONT  
ALLIANCE,  
ONLY THROUGH  
YOUR ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT,  
IS YOUR LAKE PROTECTED.  
Your Support Does  
Make a difference!  
It's an investment that pays off!**

Lobbyists are NOT FREE, but individual  
membership in MWA is VERY CHEAP; it  
costs just \$50 a year, your lake Association  
is only \$100. Think of it as an insurance

policy against the erosion of the value of  
your riparian rights of your valuable  
property.

**Take a copy of the MWA membership form  
on page #4 and share with your friends and  
neighbors.**

**JOIN MWA TODAY !**

**YOUR SUPPORT ALLOWS THE  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS YOU READ ABOUT,  
PLUS THE NECESSARY EFFORTS AND  
COMMUNICATION ACROSS OUR STATE**

**MICHIGAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE**

P.O. Box 369, Fenton, Michigan 48430

Email: [mwai@mlswa.org](mailto:mwai@mlswa.org)

WEB SITE: [www.mwai.org](http://www.mwai.org)

**Michigan Waterfront Alliance  
Board of Directors:**

**Officers:**

President **Robert Frye** Ph 989-821-6661

Email: [skibones@aol.com](mailto:skibones@aol.com)

Vice President **Richard Brown** Ph 810-629-5964

Email: [Richardb7@prodigy.net](mailto:Richardb7@prodigy.net)

Secretary **Roger Carey** Ph 989-588-9538

Email: [mcarey55@charter.net](mailto:mcarey55@charter.net)

Treasurer **Ed Highfield** Ph 231-972-2190

Email: [edhelenhighfield@gmail.com](mailto:edhelenhighfield@gmail.com)

**Directors:**

**Tom Murphy** Ph 810-750-0088

Email: [chateaux24@aol.com](mailto:chateaux24@aol.com)

**Scott Brown** Ph 517-914-1684

Email: [sbrown@mlswa.org](mailto:sbrown@mlswa.org)

**William Carey** Ph 989-348-5232

Email: [wcarey@carey-jaskowski.com](mailto:wcarey@carey-jaskowski.com)

**Bill Sharp** Ph 517-332-4255

Email: [aewbsharp@sbcglobal.net](mailto:aewbsharp@sbcglobal.net)

**Nancy Beckwith** PH 616-459-6536

Email: [1beckwi@sbcglobal.net](mailto:1beckwi@sbcglobal.net)

Copyright©2015 by Michigan Waterfront Alliance, Inc.  
For more information, contact Editor Dick Brown



## MICHIGAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE

P.O. Box 369  
Fenton, Michigan 48430-0369

January 1, 2015

### **WE LOBBY TO PROTECT MICHIGAN'S LAKE AND STREAMS. THAT'S WHAT WE DO.**

We are asking you to update your membership to Michigan Waterfront Alliance (MWA). By doing so, you can help in a statewide effort to protect Michigan's lakes and streams. MWA lobbies state government on a wide variety of issues that affect our water resources, such as road-end access, overnight and seasonal mooring of watercraft at public road ends, funding for the state's permitting system, marina regulations, septic upgrade regulations, phosphorus fertilizers, and much more.

You know how it works. When the legislature is pushed to weaken water resource protection measures, they will do just that—unless we speak out to protect our lakes and streams. It is difficult for one person or one lake association to carry the burden of protecting 11,000 lakes. And though we'd like to think that right will always prevail, one lone voice is not enough to get the attention of the leaders in state government. That is why we must join together to make our collective voice heard in Lansing. These efforts were utilized in getting legislation passed, to restrict use of phosphorus fertilizer on turf near our wetlands and prohibit overnight mooring at public road ends.

To get our message out, we retain professional lobbyists who are skilled and experienced in issue advocacy. While this expertise is very effective, it is also costly. As such, we ask you to join or renew your individual membership for \$50, Lake Association membership for \$100 or your Corporation membership for \$200 per year.

Please note the line "MWA Legal Assistance Fund" on the enclosed return envelope and form. After costly filing on two (2) Amicus Briefs (Appellate court and Supreme Court) and direct mail fundraising campaigns (to Lake Charlevoix residents), MWA incurred a total cost of over \$3000 on just this one case regarding the loss of riparian rights by court action. Turning some of these cases into State laws is a goal. The MWA Board of Directors created a MWA Legal Assistance Fund to provide the funds to support significant legal cases relevant to the mission of MWA. Funds will be disbursed in a manner consistent with MWA bylaws.

We need to build this Legal Assistance Fund. There may be a misunderstanding that if you belong to ML&SA you belong to MWA. This is not the case. ML&SA has limits for lobbying, MWA does not. We need all your help to have the funds as the needs arise. **Please be as generous as you can.** Your past understanding and support has been appreciated and necessary in order to continue a professional campaign for water resource protection. Tell your friends and neighbors! *Please send back the enclosed green envelope and give the application below to a like minded neighbor or friend.*

Sincerely,  
MWA Board of Directors

#### **Michigan Waterfront Alliance Membership Application**

Jan '15

Annual Dues: Individual Membership - \$50, Lake Associations - \$100, Corporations - \$200.

Please print:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Township \_\_\_\_\_ Lake/Stream Assoc. \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Michigan Waterfront Alliance

Send dues and contributions to:

Michigan Waterfront Alliance  
PO Box 369  
Fenton, MI 48430

Individual (\$50)	_____
Lake Assoc. (\$100)	_____
Corp. (\$200)	_____
Legal Assist. Fund	_____
Other	_____
<b>Total Enclosed</b>	<b>\$ _____</b>