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**Michigan Waterfront Alliance Update for Monday, May 15, 2023**

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Photo by Scott Brown

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**Welcome to the Michigan Waterfront Alliance**  
**Update for Monday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

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**Michigan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) is a 501(c) 4 non-profit corporation formed over twenty years ago in order to effectively advocate for the creation or preservation of state laws, and/or policies designed to protect, preserve, and promote the sustainable and wise use of our state's immense treasure of high quality freshwater resources. Our primary mission will be accomplished by pro-active participation in Michigan's legislative process (lobbying), by participating in court cases whose outcomes may have significant statewide ramifications, and/or by direct involvement with natural resources management, or environment focused state agencies or departments.**

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## Two Generations and \$70 Million Later, Muskegon Lake Is Restored

By [Audrey Whitaker](#), [Circle of Blue](#)

*The Great Lakes News Collaborative includes [Bridge Michigan](#); [Circle of Blue](#); [Great Lakes Now at Detroit Public Television](#); and [Michigan Radio](#), Michigan's NPR News Leader; who work together to bring audiences news and information about the impact of climate change, pollution, and aging infrastructure on the Great Lakes and drinking water. This independent journalism is supported by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. Find all the work [HERE](#).*

"With the conclusion of cleanup efforts on Muskegon Lake, the area has seen an increase in property values and tourism, illustrating the intrinsic connection between the community and its shoreline."

- In West Michigan, Muskegon Lake will be removed from the list of Great Lakes Areas of Concern.
- The completion of restoration efforts comes after over 30 years and \$70 million invested in cleanup.
- Along with the progress and promise of economic revitalization, there is still work to be done to protect water resources in this Lake Michigan Shoreline community.



Before the United States and Canada formally declared Muskegon Lake an “area of concern” the 4,149-acre expanse of polluted, sediment-choked, debris-congested water at the mouth of the Muskegon River was so repulsive that only rats and hungry gulls plied its shores.

More than a century of abuse by sawmills, chemical plants, energy installations, and raw sewage produced conditions so vile that by the early 1980s the lake was all but ecologically dead. In 1987, under the provisions of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, a joint U.S.-Canada pact to clear pollution from the waters of the Great Lakes, Muskegon Lake and its tributaries were designated as one of 43 similarly polluted areas of concern; 26 are located in the U.S., 12 are located in Canada, and five are shared by both countries.



The history of toxic cleanups in the U.S. includes ample evidence that the work is expensive and success is achieved over decades. That is certainly the case with Muskegon Lake. Last May, local, state and federal officials gathered at Heritage Landing, a former industrial-scrapyard-turned-waterfront park on Muskegon Lake’s south shore to declare that the \$70 million project to cleanup, remediate and restore Muskegon Lake was complete.

“There is no law, there’s no private cause of action, there’s no ability to sue within the water quality agreement,” said Jon Allan, senior advisor at the University of Michigan School for Environment and Sustainability, and U.S. co-chair of the Great Lakes Water Quality Board. “All it says is the two governments see a common problem, and they say ‘we’ll work on this together.’”

“When [AOCs] were designated, they were designated as the most contaminated places. Shouldn’t the most contaminated places get additional attention because the people who live there have suffered from that for a very long time,” Allan added. “We know enough to act, so let’s use those dollars to act.”

In Muskegon, life after delisting holds the promise of economic revitalization. With the conclusion of cleanup efforts on Muskegon Lake, the area has seen an increase in property values and tourism, illustrating the intrinsic connection between the community and its shoreline.

This has spurred enthusiasm in the community, which has struggled to overcome economic depression throughout its history and to establish itself as a tourist destination on the Lake Michigan shoreline.

While this enthusiasm and sense of accomplishment is important, after delisting, community leaders must grapple with the perception that their work is done.

The indicators of water health identified in the 1980s do not address issues such as climate change or invasive species, all of which amplified after the GLWQA was signed 50 years ago.

While the EPA recognizes these issues and their effect on the Great Lakes region, they are not part of the AOC program, said Al Steinman, director of the Annis Water Resources Institute in Muskegon, Michigan.

“Every AOC, I don’t care where you are, that’s already been delisted or will be delisted in the future still has ecological problems that need to be addressed,” Steinman said. “The key, then, is how do you communicate that to a community after it’s been delisted and you’ve had this huge celebration to get off the list?”

In Muskegon, [PFAS contamination](#) remains a major detriment to the health of the lake, along with the presence of harmful algal blooms.

Eric Kuhn, executive director of the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, said that maintaining a relationship with local stakeholders and creating a long-term management plan is key to maintaining the restoration work and to future stewardship.

Muskegon has been fortunate, given the close proximity of the Commission, Grand Valley State University’s Annis Water Resources Institute, Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership and NOAA’s Lake Michigan field station. There are natural opportunities for partnerships in the area, Kuhn said.

“Having those strong partnerships really made us be able to accomplish [restoration efforts] faster,” Kuhn said.

“It’s their community’s future, and it’s ultimately their responsibility when the state and federal funding is shifted to other areas,” said Collin Knauss, who serves as the project development manager for the [Great Lakes Protection Fund](#).





Photo by Scott Brown



Michigan Department of  
**Natural Resources**  
Caring for Michigan's outdoor places and stories since 1921



May 1, 2023

Contact: [Jennifer Kleitch](#), 989-370-2158

## Michigan's threatened and endangered species list updated

*58 species added, 36 removed, bringing list to 407 species*

The Michigan list of threatened and endangered plants and animals now includes 407 species after completion of its seventh update in nearly 50 years. Experts from universities, the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, other conservation organizations and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources recommended changes to the list based on recent data.

"When people come together to collaborate on conservation, we can recover rare species," said DNR endangered species specialist Jennifer Kleitch. "For instance, trumpeter swans were just removed from Michigan's threatened and endangered species list. Their populations have grown as a result of significant conservation efforts by many partners over decades."

Although the trumpeter swan has been removed from Michigan's list of threatened and endangered species, it is still federally protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

While 36 species were removed from the list, others still need our help, Kleitch said.

Three bat species – little brown, northern long-eared and tri-colored – have been listed as threatened due to significant population declines in the state resulting from [white-nose syndrome](#). Rusty-patched bumblebees and American bumblebees



were added to the endangered species list because, like many pollinator species, their populations are seeing large declines.

In all, 58 species were added to the list as either threatened or endangered.

“Many threatened and endangered species rely on high-quality natural areas that benefit all of us by providing clean water, clean air and places for us to enjoy nature. When species are struggling, it can indicate declines in the functioning of those natural areas, which in turn can impact our quality of life,” Kleitch said.

You can help by learning more about rare plants and animals and their conservation needs. See a full list of the state’s threatened and endangered [plants](#) and [animals](#) on the [Michigan Natural Features Inventory website](#). This website also provides additional information on what each species needs to survive and thrive.

“I encourage everyone to take an interest in rare plants and animals – they are fascinating! Learn more and support conservation efforts. Whether it be planting a native flower garden for pollinators or donating to a local land conservancy, we can all play a part,” Kleitch said.

Learn more about how the DNR manages Michigan’s wildlife at [Michigan.gov/Wildlife](#). For ideas on how to support wildlife conservation efforts, visit [Michigan.gov/DNRVolunteers](#).



Photo by Scott Brown

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May 5, 2023

Contact: [Joe Nohner](#), 517-599-6825; or [Chip Kosloski](#), 517-281-1705

## Over \$1.7 million in grants will benefit fish and aquatic systems statewide

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is awarding over \$1.7 million in [Fisheries Habitat Grants](#) for conservation projects on lakes and streams statewide. These funds are matched by more than \$3.2 million in partner contributions, for a total conservation value of about \$5 million.

The projects will rehabilitate and protect valuable fish habitats that provide the foundation for Michigan's world-class fisheries. Five of the funded projects are [DNR Priority Habitat Conservation Projects](#) – those proactively identified by the department as important to sustaining healthy habitats, fisheries and aquatic communities.

“This critical funding and the dollars it leverages will support projects that yield cleaner water, healthier fish populations and better aquatic habitats, and make

outdoor areas safer for residents,” said Gov. Gretchen Whitmer. “It is gratifying to see such collaboration and creativity being put forth to make a real difference to the natural resources that are central to our state’s appeal as an outdoor recreation destination and a big part of what makes Michigan, Michigan.”

The Fisheries Habitat Grant program provides funding for a variety of activities including fish habitat conservation, dam removal and repair, resource assessment studies and access to recreational opportunities such as fishing. Funding from fishing license sales, state of Michigan general funds and a settlement with Consumers Energy is distributed through three grant areas: aquatic habitat conservation, dam management, and aquatic habitat and recreation in the Au Sable, Manistee and Muskegon river watersheds.

Joe Nohner, a resource analyst with the DNR Fisheries Division, said the funded projects will protect and rehabilitate aquatic habitats across the state, while in many cases also improving public safety through the removal of dams.

“These projects are critical to strengthening and maintaining populations of fishes and other aquatic species,” Nohner said. “They will improve fish migration in over 230 miles of Michigan streams and boost public safety through the removal or replacement of three dams and six culverts.

“Another example of the work that will be accomplished is a project installing [shoreline woody habitat structures](#), an increasingly popular technique for improving fish habitat. These structures, often called fish sticks, are approximately 30-foot trees placed along the shoreline and nearshore zones of the lakes to provide habitat for fishes, turtles, birds and other aquatic life. They will be permitted and installed in a lake that was formerly a sand pit to improve fishing in the DNR’s Crystal Waters State Game Area in southeast Michigan.”

## Supporting work in 11 counties

Projects funded by the Fisheries Habitat Grant program (and project counties) include:

- Conservation Resource Alliance – Baldwin River Dam removal final design and permitting phase project (Lake County), \$115,000.
- Conservation Resource Alliance – Restoring and reconnecting Cedar Run Creek (Leelanau County), \$200,000.
- DNR Fisheries Division – Crystal Waters State Game Area reservoirs habitat improvement (Monroe County), \$43,600.
- Friends of the Rouge – Lower Rouge River culvert inventory to improve fish passage (Wayne County), \$67,800.
- Great Lakes Fishery Commission – Sucker River culvert replacement and seasonal sea lamprey barrier construction (Alger County), \$150,000 conditional commitment.
- Huron Pines – Replace Sparr Road/Black River culvert to enhance fish passage and river function (Otsego County), \$162,000.

- **Michigamme River Basin Water Resources Improvement Tax Increment Finance Authority – Republic Dam removal and Rock Arch Rapids construction (Marquette County), \$250,000.**
- **Michigan Trout Unlimited – Aquatic organisms passage restoration at the Grayling Fish Hatchery (Crawford County), \$400,000.**
- **Ottawa County – Ottawa Sands Lake nearshore habitat enhancements, \$142,800.**
- **Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council – Restoring aquatic connectivity on Stover Creek: Dam removal (Charlevoix County), \$189,572.**
- **University of Michigan-Flint – Fish passage at a Flint River Dam removal using rock ramps (Genesee County), \$60,800.**

**Fisheries Habitat Grant funding is available annually to local, state, federal and tribal governments and nonprofit groups through an open, competitive process. The next request for proposals is expected to be announced in September.**

**Learn more about the Fisheries Habitat Grant program and other grant opportunities at [Michigan.gov/DNRGrants](https://Michigan.gov/DNRGrants).**

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Photo by Scott Brown

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# Michigan Chapter North American Lake Management Society

The purpose of McNALMS is to promote understanding and comprehensive management of Michigan's inland lake ecosystems

## ***Join McNALMS***

If you share an interest in protecting and restoring Michigan lakes, we invite you to join the Michigan Chapter, North American Lake Management Society (McNALMS) and add your voice to our growing and active effort. With membership, you receive our informative newsletter; access to our parent organization's newsletter (national NALMS); reduced registration to our biennial Lunch and Learn meeting; eligibility to apply to our Student Grants and other financial assistance programs; information on other grants, courses, fact sheets, and announcements; and becoming a part of a network of individuals and corporations interested in lake conservation.

[Click here](#) to join McNALMS

[Click here](#) to download and read the Spring 2023 McNALMS Newsletter

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## **NotMISpecies Webinar Series**

Invasive species pose a threat to Michigan's environment, economy, and sometimes even human health. What is at stake? What is being done? [This webinar series](#) explores how agencies, universities, and locally led organizations are working together to protect Michigan's natural resources through the Michigan Invasive Species Program. If you are concerned about the impacts of invasive species or interested in the techniques used to control them, join us as we examine species-specific actions, innovations in research and technology, and programs designed to help communities prevent and manage harmful invasive species. A question-and-answer period will follow each presentation. Recorded versions of all previous [NotMISpecies webinars](#) are available at [Michigan.gov/EGLE/Outreach](https://Michigan.gov/EGLE/Outreach) under "Featured Webinar Series."

## Upcoming webinars in the series

Thursday, May 25, 2023, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

[To infinity...and beyond \(beauty\)! Highlighting a statewide ornamental invasive plant outreach program.](#)

Did you know that many invasive plants in natural areas originally arrived as ornamental garden plants? That's why the *Go Beyond Beauty* program recognizes garden professionals and community members who have committed not to sell or use high-priority ornamental invasive plants. Shelly Stusick, program specialist at Northwest Michigan Invasive Species Network, will provide an overview of the recently expanded *Go Beyond Beauty* program and highlight the benefits of partnering with local nurseries, garden centers and concerned citizen groups to provide ornamental invasive species education.

Wednesday, June 14, 2023, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

[Life's a beech! Another disease is threatening Michigan's majestic giants](#)

Beech leaf disease was first detected in Michigan in 2022, raising concern about the future of the state's 37 million beech trees, already decimated by beech bark disease. Join Simeon Wright, DNR forest health specialist, to learn about the potential impacts this new disease might have on Michigan's forests, what's being done to address it, and how to spot the symptoms of beech leaf disease on your trees.

Thursday, July 13, 2023, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

[Can this moth help save monarchs? Swallow-wort biological control efforts in Michigan](#)

Invasive swallow-wort vines, kin to native milkweed plants, are disrupting the life cycle of monarch butterflies. *Hypena opulenta*, a defoliating moth that can only develop on invasive swallow-worts, was discovered in Ukraine and is now approved for field releases in North America. Marianna Szucs from the Department of Entomology at Michigan State University will describe research efforts to establish this moth in Michigan, and the importance of climate match and genetic diversity of the biocontrol agent.



## Recorded webinars in this series:

[Lobster mobsters: An update on Michigan's red swamp crayfish response](#) (recorded 2/07/23, 60 min)

Though sometimes called “mini-lobsters,” invasive red swamp crayfish are anything but sweet. Once they show up in an ecosystem, they quickly take over, leaving little or nothing for the locals. Dr. Lucas Nathan, aquatic invasive species coordinator for the Michigan DNR, is intent on turning the tide of infestation in southeast Michigan. Join him to hear about recent advances in research and management of this combative crustacean.

[If you can't beat 'em, find something that will eat 'em: Biological control for invasive knotweeds](#) (recorded 1/18/23, 61 min)

When infestations of invasive species become too large to control chemically and mechanically, biological control can be a cost-effective alternative. Marianna Szucs from the Department of Entomology at Michigan State University will provide a brief background on the practice of classical biological control and share her lab's efforts to establish two host races of the knotweed psyllid (jumping plant lice) that are adapted to different knotweed species.



# NATURAL SHORELINES for Inland Lakes



The Michigan Natural Shoreline Partnership (MNSP), a collaboration of state agencies, academia, nonprofit organizations and private industry, was formed in 2008 with the belief that a change was necessary in shoreline development practices in Michigan from high impacting methods that change the natural riparian condition to healthier and sustainable erosion control practices that:

- 1. Restore/Preserve the ecological function of the shoreline.*
- 2. Effectively stabilize shoreline erosion.*
- 3. Are attractive options to lakefront property owners.*

## Partnership Objectives:

- 1. Train contractors and landscape professionals about shoreline technologies and bioengineered erosion control.*
- 2. Educate property owners about natural shorelines and technologies that benefit lake ecosystems.*
- 3. Research, demonstrate, and develop natural shoreline technologies that benefit lake ecosystems.*
- 4. Encourage local and state policies that promote natural shoreline management.*

## MISSION:

Protecting Michigan lakes through conservation and restoration of natural shorelines.



If not **you**, then **who?**  
We need **you!**

Michigan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) is the only all-volunteer non-profit organization in Michigan that is completely dedicated to reaching out on a daily, pro-active basis to our state representatives and senators in regards to their on-going need to act now to protect our precious inland lakes, wetlands, rivers, and streams.

Please do not expect other lake associations, other individuals, and other corporations to fund MWA's efforts in Lansing.

If **you** want your voice to be heard in Lansing **you** need to be the other lake association, the other individual, and the other **corporation**



to make a generous contribution to helping fund our on-going efforts in Lansing.

Please don't count on others to support the only organization in Michigan that is completely dedicated to voicing your legitimate concerns to our state legislators in Lansing.

We hire professional lobbyists - **Karoub Associates** - who understand the intricacies of dealing with state government - to reach out to our legislators. As you might imagine, the cost of hiring a professional, highly respected Lansing-based lobbying firm whose downtown Lansing office's are located within a literal stone's throw of Michigan's state capitol building is expensive - we believe, however, that to have someone in constant contact with our state senators and representatives it is more than worth the significant on-going expense.

To put it in blunt "no ifs, ands, or buts" terms, without **your** generous support we will be unable to continue our erstwhile efforts in Lansing.

Please also remember that with the exception of a few relatively minor expenses related to keeping our website updated, and on-line, and a few relatively minor costs associated with distributing our e-newsletter, **all** of our membership and donation derived income goes to paying our downtown Lansing-based lobbying firm, and our attorneys. No exorbitant employee salaries or fringe benefit packages to pay!!!!!!!!!!

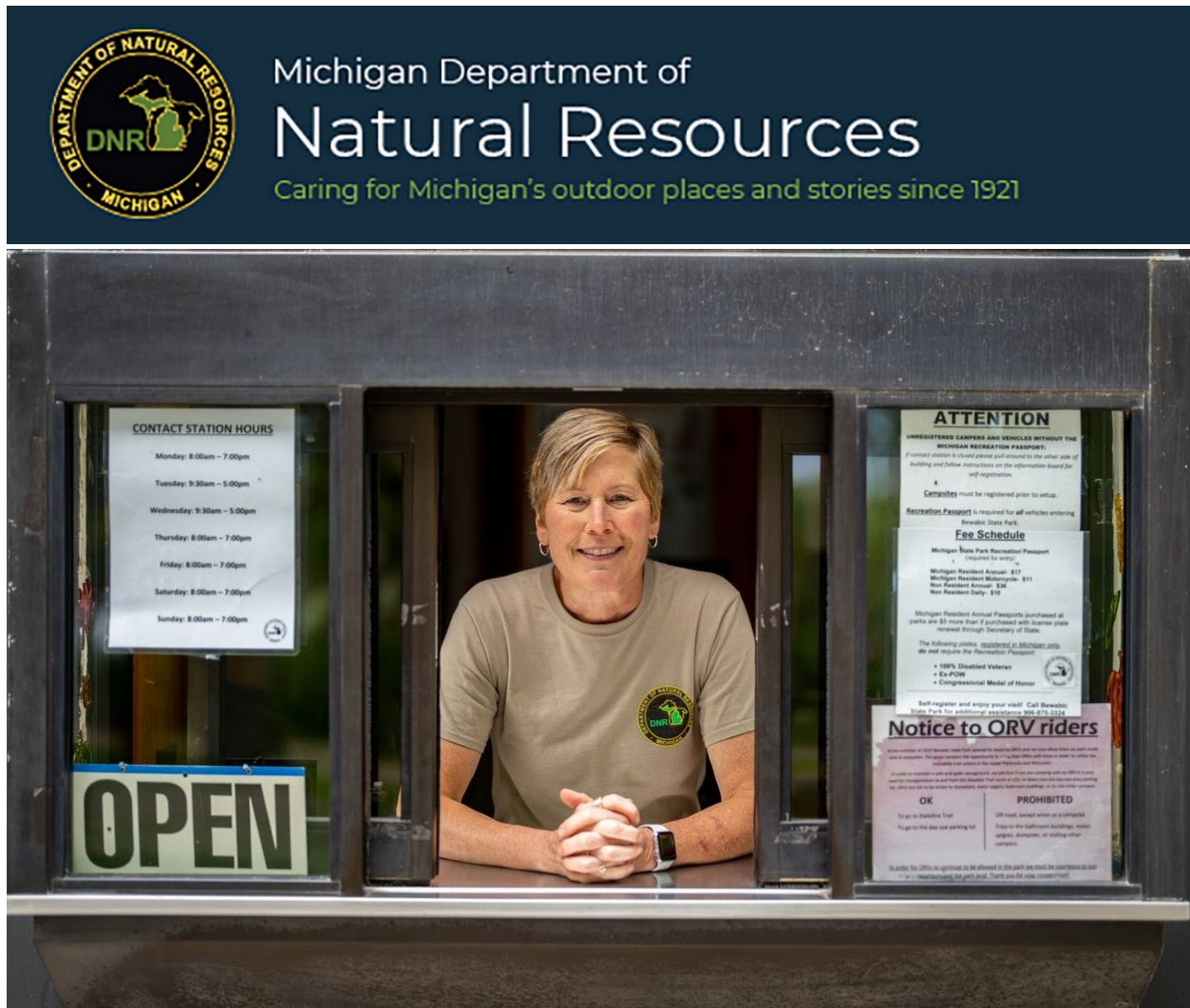
It is also important to note that last year **Michigan Waterfront Alliance** lawyers took a case all the way to the Michigan Supreme Court in order to get the State of Michigan to do it's job in protecting our lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands.

**Thank you** for reading and considering this hopefully convincing appeal for donations - **no amount is considered too small** - all

donations of money are happily received and acknowledged within the context of the generous spirit that prompted them!!!!!!!

**Click here** to become a dues paying member of MWA

**Click here** to make a generous donation to MWA



**State parks, trails, and waterways**

**Do you like to spend your summers outdoors? What if you could get paid for it, too? We've got just the thing! We're hiring!**

**Starting rate is \$15/hour.**

**Know someone that might be interested?**

**To learn about these opportunities, visit**



## Events Listing

*All times Eastern. "\$" indicates there may be a cost to participate.*

**May 16, 2:00 PM: Healthy Watersheds, High-Quality Waters-** A new program for protecting the wonderful waters of Wisconsin. Presented by Pamela Toshner, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Host: Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership. [More details.](#)

**NEW May 23, 9:00 AM: Healthy forests protect drinking water.** Presented by Mike Smalligan and Meagan Hoffman, Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Host: Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy. [More details.](#)

**NEW May 31, 7:30 PM: Wakes, waves, and propeller wash: Research on the impacts of recreational boating on inland lakes.** Presented by Jeff Marr and Andy Riesgraf, University of Minnesota. [Register.](#)

**June 30, 11:30 AM: Making lake life great (*how individuals and governments can keep our inland lakes well loved and well protected*).** Presented by Michigan Lakes and Streams Association. Host: Michigan Environmental Council. [More details.](#)

**August 20-24: 153rd American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting, Grand Rapids, Michigan (*hybrid event: virtual and in-person options*).** Host: American Fisheries Society. [More details.](#) \$

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**>>> We Need Your Help!!!**  
**<<<**

**Why You Should Join  
Michigan Waterfront Alliance today?**

**Do you care about your favorite lake, river, or stream?**

**Do you care enough to contact your state senator or representative about issues that may affect the quality of your waterbody?**

**Do you keep track of the bills that are important to your lake, river, or stream that may have been introduced in the Michigan House or Senate?**

**The good news is that Michigan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) is doing this for you.**

**And while we're at it - we will remind you that the activities and efforts of the Michigan Waterfront Alliance are conducted entirely by passionate volunteers who donate their own time and personal resources to helping preserve and protect Michigan's extraordinary freshwater lakes, ponds, rivers, stream and wetlands.**

**Did you know that not a single person who works directly on behalf of our non-profit organization receives compensation of any sort - financial or otherwise?**

**Did you know that with the exception of paying our attorneys to represent your interests, and the best interests of preserving our freshwater resources in court, that the majority of the relatively modest amount of revenue we generate from memberships is entirely dedicated to paying our Lansing-based lobbyist to work on your behalf and on behalf of protecting Michigan's water resources in our state capitol??**

**Did you know that Michigan Waterfront Alliance is a pro-active member of the collaborative lake conservation focused organization known as the Michigan Inland Lakes Partnership???**

**Did you know that Michigan Waterfront Alliance was a 'platinum' level sponsor of the 2022 Michigan Inland Lakes Convention??**

**Did you know that Michigan Waterfront Alliance is a founding member of the Michigan Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force, a collaborative effort that is comprised of the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE), the Michigan**

Department of Natural Resources, and several statewide non-profit organizations that is dedicated to stopping the introduction and spread of exotic aquatic invasive plants and animals??

Did you know that our volunteers often reach out to elected members of the United States House of Representatives, the United States Senate, and to the United States Environmental Protection Agency in regards to resolving federal government level issues that pertain to protecting Michigan's freshwater resources??

Why not become a pro-active part of our efforts to help preserve and protect Michigan's incredible freshwater resources for future generations by becoming a member today??

Please remember that we rely entirely upon membership dues to fund the operating costs of our organization...

TO BECOME A MEMBER OF  
MICHIGAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE VISIT OUR  
>>>>> MEMBERSHIP PAGE <<<<<<

Annual Dues are:

\$50 for an individual;

\$100 for a lake association; and

\$200 for a corporation

With support from individuals like you, lake associations, and corporations, we can continue to work together as a unified voice choosing to protect



**Michigan's water resources for future generations. Thank you for your consideration!!!**

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## **ATTENTION READERS!!!**

**In order to add your friends, neighbors, and/or fellow lake or watershed conservation focused association member e-mails to our growing list of water resource conservation minded people who would like to receive this Michigan freshwater resources focused twice monthly newsletter, contact Editor Scott Brown at [scottb1952@gmail.com](mailto:scottb1952@gmail.com)**

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## **Join Michigan Waterfront Alliance!**

- **Are you tired of funding the management of aquatic invasive species on your lake that were introduced by recreational boaters using the local MI Department of Natural Resources public boating access site?**
- **Are you just a bit angry that recreational boaters using your lake are not being asked to contribute their fair share to combat the negative influences of aquatic invasive species?**
- **Are you worried about the fact that your lakefront residential property values are being negatively**

influenced by the steadily increasing presence of aquatic invasive species?

- Are you concerned about the fact that it is nearly impossible to find an inland lake in Michigan that does not currently host one or more potentially harmful aquatic invasive species?
- Are you aware of the fact that inland lakes are Michigan's most valuable natural resource, and that our state legislature has thus far appropriated almost nothing in the way of budget resources to help ensure they remain healthy and viable?

If your answer is yes to any of these important questions, please help ensure that your voice is heard in Lansing by joining Michigan Waterfront Alliance today.

[Click here to Join MWA](#)



[Visit the Michigan Waterfront Alliance Web Site by Clicking Here](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

  
TRY IT FOR FREE ▶