
Michigan Waterfront Alliance Update for Thursday, May 1, 2025

1 message



Photo by Scott Brown

Welcome to the Michigan Waterfront Alliance

Update for Thursday, May 1, 2025



**MICHIGAN
WATERFRONT
ALLIANCE**

Michigan **W**aterfront **A**lliance

P. O. Box 392

Mecosta, MI 49332-0392

michiganwaterfrontalliance.com

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.



**The 'Not So Great Lakes State' that Continues to Allow
Billions of Gallons of Toxic Raw Sewage from 300,000
Dysfunctional Septic Tanks to Pollute Thousands of our
Immensely Valuable Lakes, Rivers, and Streams**

by Scott Brown
MWA e-Newsletter Editor

For those of us who recognize the immense value of the multi-faceted contributions that our inland lakes and rivers make to Michigan's increasingly 'blue' economy and culture, the failure of our state legislature to enact legislation that would have established a statewide septic system code represents a tragedy of increasingly dire proportions. Strident opposition from county health departments, the real estate industry, and from "don't tread on me" politicians who believe that any form of environmental regulation represents a threat to the exercise of individual liberty, helped ensure that the common sense legislation that was introduced in the last session of our state legislature did not even come up for an up or down vote.

For the Great Lakes state whose vast natural heritage of immensely valuable freshwater resources - our extraordinary inland lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands and groundwater aquifers that contribute billions of dollars of vital services to Michigan's economy - we find ourselves in the embarrassing and increasingly dangerous predicament of being the only state in the United States of America who continues to allow billions of gallons of raw, toxic toilet bowl waste to flow unimpeded into our precious freshwaters each year from hundreds of thousands of dysfunctional septic tanks.

Representing an increasingly dire threat to the health of our citizens and to the innate capacity of our freshwater resources to continue to provide immensely valuable economic and ecological services to Michigan's increasingly blue economy, our collective lack of willingness to enact and enforce a common sense statewide septic system code has already resulted in the fact that many of our rivers and streams host levels of e-coli and other pollutants, including PFAS, that represent a serious threat to the health of anyone who comes into contact with what represents an increasingly toxic brew of life threatening substances. This author is reminded of the intensely polluted rivers that flow through heavily populated urban areas of India where even momentary contact with the water threatens the onset of severe illness or death.

The enactment and implementation of a well funded, common sense statewide septic system code will go a long way to helping resolve the fact that one quarter, or 330,000 of Michigan's 1.3 million septic tanks spill almost six billion gallons of *E. coli* and harmful

chemical contaminated wastewater into our freshwater treasures each year due to the fact that they have not been properly maintained or pumped out on a regular basis. The severity of the problem in Michigan is effectively illustrated by the fact that roughly half of our rivers and streams have been contaminated with human fecal matter derived *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) bacteria levels that greatly exceed the minimum concentrations that are known to be responsible for the onset of a dangerous array of debilitating human diseases.

It is also important to note that the overall ecological health and water quality of thousands of our inland lakes is also threatened by the extreme levels of water clarity threatening phosphorus and nitrogen that originates from tens of thousands of near shore residential septic tanks that have not been properly maintained in decades. The increasing frequency of toxic blue-green algae blooms, also known as cyanobacteria, that are observed in Michigan represents a reliable indicator of the increasingly dire need to remedy a situation that allows billions of gallons of toxic raw sewage from 300,000 dysfunctional septic tanks to flow into our precious freshwaters each year.

It is important to point out that the Great Lakes state – Michigan, endowed with a vast treasure of life sustaining freshwater, is the only state in America that has not established a statewide code for regulating the construction, inspection, and periodic maintenance of septic systems. In the continued absence of a statewide septic system code, only 11 of Michigan's 83 counties have passed local ordinances that regulate the construction, inspection, and maintenance of residential septic tanks and their associated drain fields.

For those of us who understand and appreciate the vast contributions that our freshwater resources make to Michigan's 'blue' economy and culture, it is difficult to understand how otherwise responsible state legislators can allow hundreds of thousands of failing septic systems to continue to degrade tens of thousands of freshwater ecosystems – our lakes, our rivers, our streams, our creeks, our wetlands, and our ground water aquifers - while at the same time presenting a significant health threat to the people of Michigan. Readers of this newsletter can be assured that Michigan Waterfront Alliance will continue our proactive efforts to convince state law makers of the increasingly dire need to enact legislation that would establish a state septic system code.

Readers of this newsletter are encouraged to contact their respective state representatives or state senator to encourage them to support the enactment of a statewide septic system code - the capacity of our freshwater resources to contribute to a healthy, prosperous 'blue' economy and culture for future generations of Michigan citizens depends on our success!



<https://www.noaa.gov/>



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 under “All Webinar Series.”

Upcoming webinars in the series

Wednesday, May 28, 2025, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

[What Lies Beneath: Detecting Invasive Plants in Michigan Lakes](#)

Often, invasive aquatic plants exist unseen, lurking and spreading below the waterline until they've grown into a major problem. Fortunately, a trained eye can find these invaders before they wreak havoc. That's where the MiCorps Cooperative Lakes Monitoring Program's Exotic Aquatic Plant Watch comes in! Join Erick Elgin and Jo Latimore from Michigan State University Extension as they reveal the training and tools available to help volunteers detect and track these underwater invaders. Hear firsthand from dedicated volunteers who have made surprising discoveries in the lakes they cherish. Whether you're a seasoned lake steward or just getting started, this webinar will inspire you to take a closer look beneath the surface!

Wednesday, June 25, 2025, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

[Digging in: Michigan's Unconventional Response to Hydrilla](#)

Hydrilla is known as one of the most difficult aquatic invasive plants to control. When it was found for the first time in Michigan in September 2023, the Michigan Invasive Species Program chose to take decisive action to eradicate it. Project lead Billy Keiper of EGLE's Water Resources Division will walk through the response effort from detection to the recent excavation of two private ponds. Learn why and how this extraordinary effort was undertaken and the deliberation, planning and cooperation that made it possible.

Tuesday, July 29, 2025, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

[Spotting the Spotted Lanternfly: What to Know and What You Can Do](#)

Invasive spotted lanternfly, first detected in Pennsylvania in 2014, is now present in at least 18 eastern U.S. states. In Michigan, localized spotted lanternfly infestations in four southeastern counties are expected to build and spread, especially in areas where invasive tree of heaven, the insect's preferred host, occurs. Deborah McCullough, professor of forest entomology at Michigan State University, will cover spotted lanternfly's life stages, tree of heaven identification and spotted lanternfly's impacts on trees and people. Options for managing spotted lanternfly, if or when it arrives in your neighborhood, will be included.

Wednesday, August 27, 2025, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

[They'll need that hug: How climate change is increasing native and invasive threats to Michigan's trees \(Rescheduled\)](#)

Invasive insects and diseases, including hemlock woolly adelgid, beech bark and beech leaf disease, are taking a toll on Michigan's forests. As if this weren't enough, the changing climate is further stressing trees and may lead to greater impacts by both invasive and native insects and diseases.

Join forest entomologist Erin Biggs and forest pathologist Simeon Wright of the Department of Natural Resources to learn more about these emerging issues, how they are being addressed, and which may have the biggest impact on Michigan's forests and urban landscapes.

[Michigan.gov/EGLEevents](https://michigan.gov/EGLEevents)

REGISTRATION QUESTIONS:

Joel Roseberry: RoseberryJ@michigan.gov

Alana Berthold: BertholdA@michigan.gov

SHORELINE & SHALLOWS CONFERENCE

SAVE THE DATE!
October 17, 2025
Kellogg Conference Center

www.shorelinepartnership.org



www.shorelinepartnership.org



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY

Training and Outreach

WEBINAR

Coastal Flood Zones: A presentation on the new FEMA coastal flood zones in Michigan

Wednesday, May 14, 2025 10:00 - 11:00 AM

Is there a Coastal Flood Zone in your community and do you know the development requirements? This presentation will help answer this question and cover where the new zones are located, how to interpret FEMA maps around coastal areas, and will also include a summary on coastal floodplain requirements for development. Anyone involved or interested in development within coastal communities such as supervisors, clerks, building officials and inspectors, engineers, and surveyors are welcome to attend.

REGISTRATION AND INFORMATION

Michigan.gov/EGLEvents

PROGRAM QUESTIONS:

Matt Occhipinti: occhipintim@michigan.gov

REGISTRATION QUESTIONS:

Alana Berthold: BertholdA@Michigan.gov

Joel Roseberry: RoseberryJ@Michigan.gov

Local Leaders webinar
series



Onsite Septic Systems and Septic Replacement Loan Program

May 21, 2025, 10:00 - 11:00 AM

More than 1.3 million homes and businesses in Michigan depend on septic systems to treat wastewater. If not maintained, failing septic systems can contaminate groundwater and harm the environment by releasing bacteria, viruses, and household toxics to local waterways.

This informative session will cover septic system operation and maintenance practices and steps to take if you have a septic system problem. This session will also include an update on the Michigan Septic Loan Replacement Program.

[REGISTER for Onsite Septic Systems and Septic Replacement Loan Program](#)



Photo by Scott Brown

Coontail

Scientific Name: *Ceratophyllum demersum*

MIDWEST
GLACIAL LAKES
Partnership

2025 MGLP Lake Conservation Webinars

We are excited to announce our 2025 Lake Conservation Webinars, which start next week!

These free webinars address a diverse range of lake and fish habitat management issues such as aquatic plants, algal blooms, national lake water quality mapping, conservation planning, practices for managing farm drainage and runoff, fish habitat structures, Walleye spawning and stocking, and disproportionate monitoring relative to communities of color.

Check out our lineup below and register using the links provided. You can view the full list of webinars plus recordings of past webinars on our [Lake Conservation Webinars webpage](#).

Walleye stocking success in the Midwestern USA

Daniel Isermann and Robert Davis

October 7, 2025 at 1 PM Central

[Register for webinar](#)

This study evaluated stocking success of Walleye in lakes and reservoirs across the Midwestern United States to inform stocking practices for state agencies. Demand for Walleye stocking may increase if climate change limits the potential for natural recruitment in lakes. Consequently, the strategic distribution of Walleye stocking may maximize fishing opportunities. Latitude and year explained relatively little variation in stocking success compared to within-lake variation. Relative abundance of Largemouth Bass was an important indicator of Walleye stocking success for fry and fingerlings, with stocking success generally decreasing with increased bass abundance. There was an interaction between lake surface area and growing degree-days, as large lakes (>2500 ha) seemed to be more conducive to Walleye stocking success regardless of growing degree-days. These findings may help to inform the management and stocking allocation of Walleye and suggest that future increases in Largemouth Bass abundance and growing degree-days could limit the effectiveness of stocking in some lakes.

Expect the unexpected: Physical drivers of harmful algal blooms in remote systems

Adam Heathcote

October 14, 2025 at 1 PM Central

Register for webinar

Harmful algal blooms (HABs) are often linked to external nutrient inputs from anthropogenic phosphorus pollution or atmospheric nitrogen deposition. However, the increasing occurrence of blooms without these inputs has shifted attention to internal drivers. Recent research highlights internal phosphorus loading from sediments, driven by changing stratification patterns, as a key trigger. We present examples from wilderness to hypereutrophic lakes, where HABs occur or intensify due to anoximixis. Using high-frequency sensors and traditional monitoring, we compare bloom timing and intensity with factors such as hypolimnetic phosphorus accumulation, mixing frequency, and cyanotoxin production. Our findings emphasize the need to understand anoximixis as climate change alters lake stratification and accelerates oxygen depletion. These changes may lead to more toxic blooms in affected systems and trigger blooms in lakes previously thought to be resistant.

Smart maps, stronger conservation: Targeting land protection with GIS

Annie Knight, Ally Mazurek, Mitch Brinks, and Paul Radomski

October 21, 2025 at 1 PM Central

Register for webinar

Northern Waters Land Trust (NWLT) will be presenting on their MGLP-funded project, which developed an interactive GIS mapping tool to identify and prioritize land protection projects within the watersheds of Lakes of Outstanding Biological Significance. In collaboration with a Minnesota DNR researcher, a GIS specialist, and NWLT staff, each parcel within these sensitive watersheds was systematically scored to determine conservation priority. Join this session to learn exactly what metrics were used to evaluate parcels, how the data were integrated into GIS, and how NWLT applies this tool to enhance targeted outreach. This innovative approach has led to a higher volume of landowner applications, increased the quality of land protection projects, and strengthened NWLT's ability to secure funding for future conservation efforts. Discover how scientific methodology and strategic mapping are shaping the future of land conservation in northern Minnesota.

Local Leaders Webinar Series

Register to learn about environmental regulations and how they affect your community!

Join the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) for this free monthly webinar series, to learn how to address environmental issues in your community. Each month, EGLE will host a 1-hour webinar that will tackle a topic of interest to local officials and community leaders throughout the state. Topics will include odors, wetlands, inland lakes, septic systems, contaminated property, illegal dumping, and more.

Each webinar will include a presentation by EGLE staff and time for questions from attendees. All webinars will be recorded and a link to the recordings will be shared with all registrants, after each session. More information about the series, including upcoming webinars and recordings of past webinars, can be found on the [series webpage](#).

Upcoming webinars in the series

May 21, 10 - 11 AM

[Onsite Septic Systems and Septic Replacement Loan Program](#)

June 17, 10 - 11 AM

[Dust: How to Deal with it in your community](#)

Michigan.gov/EGLEevents

Program Questions:

Jim Ostrowski: Ostrowskij2@Michigan.gov

Registration Questions:

Alana Berthold: BertholdA@Michigan.gov



Our long term vision is to address Michigan's most pressing lake, stream, and watershed conservation and stewardship challenges and provide research-based, timely support to clientele and partners.

The Center for Lakes and Streams streamlines lake and stream research, engagement, and education activities at the university and highlights the many programs MSU Extension and its partners offer throughout the state. The MSU Extension Center for Lakes and Streams is not a physical center with a brick-and-mortar headquarters. It is a team of Extension

educators and outreach faculty based throughout Michigan with a shared mission of advancing the conservation and stewardship of Michigan's inland lakes and streams.

To achieve this vision, the Center will welcome affiliated faculty from various departments at MSU and will invite external stakeholder input. Affiliates and stakeholders will support the work of the Center by identifying emerging issues and assisting with the prioritization of research and education activities. The Center will welcome stakeholder input from diverse perspectives, including state agencies, tribal partners, other Michigan universities, local and regional decision makers, agricultural producers, and nonprofit, community and riparian organizations.

Want to learn more?

Reach out to the Center for Lakes and Streams Director Dr. Jo Latimore at latimor1@msu.edu.



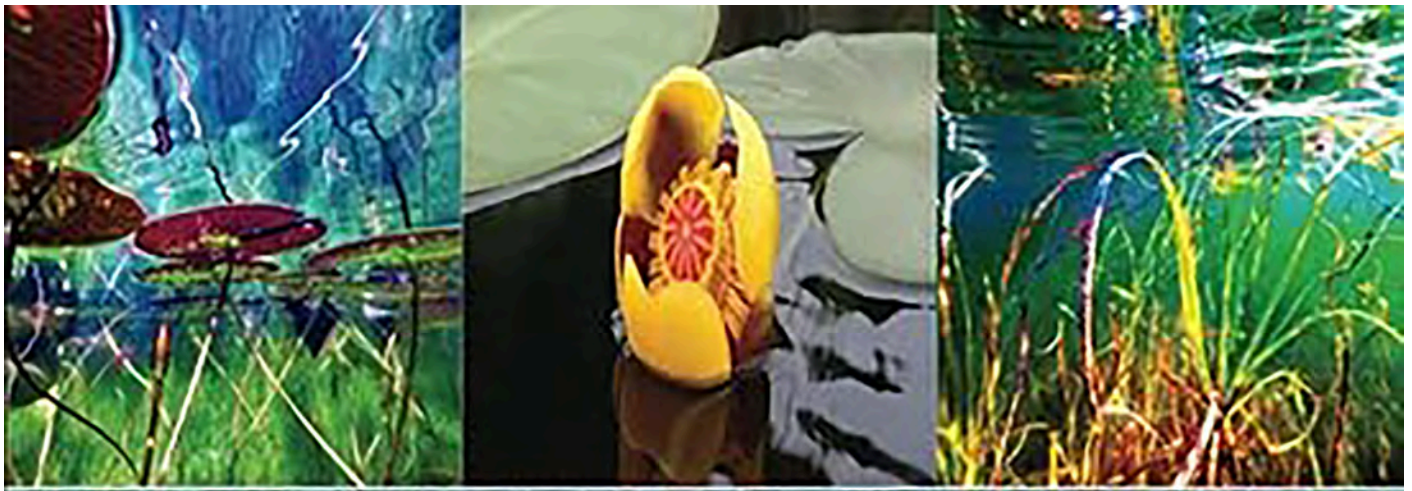
Please join Michigan Waterfront Alliance!

**We Need the Support of People Like You Who Care about
Preserving and Protecting our Extraordinarily Valuable
Freshwater Resources for Future Generations Now!!!**

- **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 owned and operated public boating access site?**
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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 Michigan Waterfront Alliance today !!!



The Common Aquatic Plants of the Great Lakes Region

and the

**Vital Role That They Play in Helping to
Promote and Sustain Healthy Inland
Lake Ecosystems and Bio-Diversity**

by William 'Scott' Brown



The presence of a healthy native aquatic plant community whose growth extends from a thriving natural shoreline or from near shore shallow waters into areas of the lake's glacier

carved basin hosting relatively deep water serves as a remarkably reliable bio-indicator of the existence of clear sunlight inundated waters, moderate biological productivity, an array of fish species and many other freshwater ecosystem dependent creatures, and good overall water quality. Comprised of a diverse assemblage of large aquatic plants that are referred to as macrophytes, abundantly growing macrophyte communities help to establish and sustain a multitude of vital interactive biological and ecological functions that make important contributions to helping preserve the overall health of tens of thousands of moderately productive inland lakes in the Laurentian Great Lakes region.

Available for purchase as a paperback on Amazon by
[clicking here](#)

A percentage of profit derived from the sale of this book will
be
donated to help sustain the on-going Lansing-based
lobbying
efforts of Michigan Waterfront Alliance...



---The Problem is Real---

The loss of natural shorelines is the biggest threat

to the overall health of Michigan lakes

National Lakes Assessment

Shoreland development is impacting Michigan's lakes causing issues such as poor water quality, erosion, and loss of fish and wildlife habitat. Taking action on your property now can help reverse these effects and protect the health of your lake.

To learn more about the mission, goals, and unique educational opportunities provided by the

Michigan **N**atural **S**horeline **P**artnership

[Click here](#)

BRONZE
MI Healthy Lakes

Champion

\$250

Donate

SILVER
MI Healthy Lakes

Champion

\$500

Donate

GOLD
MI Healthy Lakes

Champion

\$1000

Donate

PLEASE CONSIDER BECOMING A MICHIGAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE MI HEALTHY LAKES CHAMPION TODAY!!!

YOUR GENEROUS DONATION OF \$250, \$500, or \$1,000 WILL AMPLIFY OUR CAPACITY TO LOBBY FOR THE PASSAGE OF COMMON SENSE LEGISLATION THAT IS PENDING IN LANSING IN REGARDS TO REGULATING WAKE BOATS AND SEPTIC TANKS!!! AS OUR READERS ARE WELL AWARE, OUT OF CONTROL WAKE BOATS ARE DAMAGING OUR LAKES, AND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF DYSFUNCTIONAL SEPTIC SYSTEMS ARE DEGRADING OUR LAKES, RIVERS, STREAMS, AND GROUNDWATER!!!

TO BECOME AN MWA MI HEALTHY LAKES CHAMPION

[CLICK HERE](#)



Lake Webinars and Virtual Events

May 1, 1:00 PM: [Climate change effects on fisheries](#). Host: Itasca Waters.

May 21, 10:00 AM: Onsite septic systems and Septic Replacement Loan Program. Host: Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy.

June 5, 1:00 PM: Septic health check: A deep dive into inspections and maintenance. Host: Itasca Waters.

July 10, 1:00 PM: Biology and management of starry stonewort. Presented by Dan Larkin, University of Minnesota - Twin Cities. Host: Itasca Waters.

August 7, 1:00 PM: Harmful algae blooms and climate change. Presented by Chris Filstrup, University of Minnesota - Duluth. Host: Itasca Waters.

September 4, 1:00 PM: Water and drainage infrastructure in changing climate. Host: Itasca Waters.

October 2, 1:00 PM: Traditional ecological knowledge in lake management. Host: Itasca Waters.

NEW October 7, 2:00 PM: Walleye stocking success in the Midwestern USA. Presented by Daniel Isermann, US Geological Survey - Wisconsin Cooperative Fishery Research Unit, University of Wisconsin Stevens Point; and Robert Davis, Young Harris College. Host: Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership.

NEW October 14, 2:00 PM: Expect the unexpected: Physical drivers of harmful algal blooms in remote systems. Presented by Adam Heathcote, Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Croix Watershed Research Station. Host: Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership.

NEW October 21, 2:00 PM: Smart maps, stronger conservation: Targeting land protection with GIS. Presented by Annie Knight and Ally Mazurek, Northern Waters Land Trust; Mitch Brinks, GIS specialist; and Paul Radomski, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Host: Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership.

November 6, 1:00 PM: Banded mystery snail effects on lakes. Host: Itasca Waters.

December 4, 1:00 PM: Water wishes for the holidays. Presented by John Downing, Hilarie Sorensen, Sawyer Lorentz, and Holly Ristau, Minnesota Sea Grant. Host: Itasca Waters.



Please join Michigan Waterfront Alliance!

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and Protecting our Extraordinarily Valuable Freshwater
Resources for Future Generations Now!!!**

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boaters using the local MI Department of Natural Resources owned and operated public boating access site?

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- 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 Michigan Waterfront Alliance today !!!



Please Consider Donating, and/or Becoming a Dues Paying Member of Michigan Waterfront Alliance Today

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 is 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.





If not **you**, then **who**?

We need **you!**

Michigan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) is the only all-volunteer non-profit organization in Michigan that is dedicated to reaching out on a daily, pro-active basis to our state representatives and senators about 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.

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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



Join Michigan Waterfront Alliance!

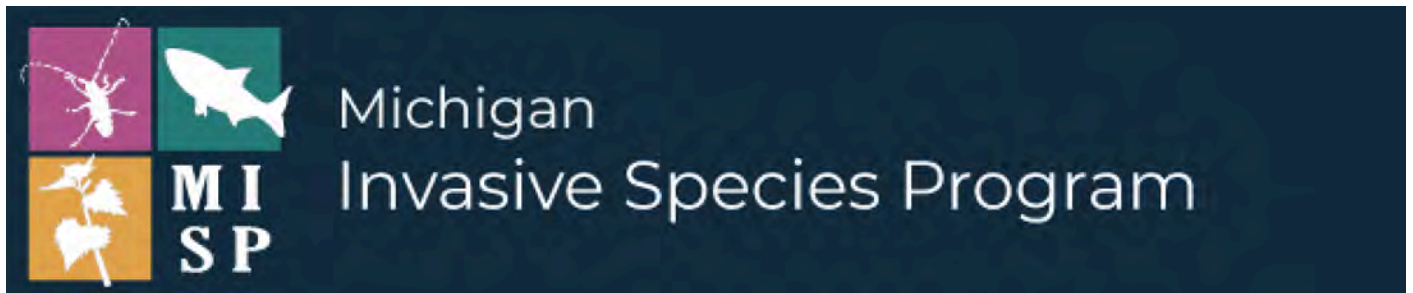
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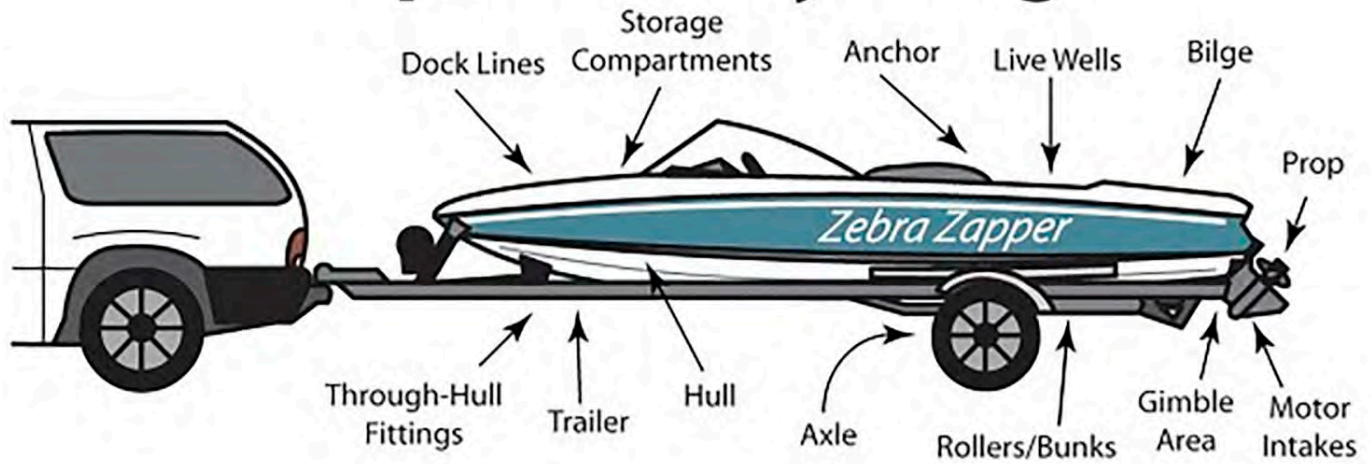
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[Click here](#) to join Michigan Waterfront Alliance today...!!!



Before leaving and before launching...
inspect everything!



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



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[Click here to Join MWA](#)

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[Unsubscribe](#)