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**Michigan Waterfront Alliance Update for Monday, December 15, 2025**

1 message

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Photo by Scott Brown

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Welcome to the Michigan Waterfront Alliance

Update for Monday, December 15, 2025



# HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!

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**MICHIGAN  
WATERFRONT  
ALLIANCE**

**M**ichigan **W**aterfront **A**lliance

P. O. Box 392

Mecosta, MI 49332-0392

[michiganwaterfrontalliance.com](http://michiganwaterfrontalliance.com)

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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 proactive 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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Photo by Scott Brown

## **Legislation to Expand the Types of Water Resource Improvement Projects**

**Funded by MI Public Act 57 Tax Increment Enabled Financing Introduced**

**in the Michigan State Senate**

**by Scott Brown**

**MWA e-Newsletter Editor**

**In an effort to significantly expand the types of local government funded projects associated with helping to preserve, protect, and/or effectively manage the inland lakes, rivers, and streams within their jurisdictions, State Senator Sam Singh has introduced legislation that if enacted into law would amend Part 7, "water resource improvement" of Public Act 57 of 2018.**

**If passed into law, Senate Bill 553 would expand the types of projects currently allowed to be funded at the local level by tax increment financing that in addition to funding the elimination of aquatic nuisance species, improving and/or maintaining existing sewer system infrastructure, dredging, and/or improving or maintaining the navigability of a waterway, tax increment financing could now be used to also fund projects related to:**

- **Green stormwater infrastructure**
- **Natural shoreline protection**
- **Ecological assessments,**
- **Seawall replacement**
- **Lake management planning**
- **Native plant inventory**
- **Riparian assessments**
- **Water quality monitoring**
- **Boat wash stations at public launches**
- **Community events**

**It is important to note that Michigan tax increment financing as defined by Public Act 57 of 2018 is a tool that allows local governments to capture ad valorem induced increases in property tax revenue generated within a designated district to finance public improvement projects.**



A Michigan conservation officer practices getting out of icy water during training. Take note of the ice picks, staying low and crawling out of the entry hole.

**Heading out for some ice fishing in the coming weeks?  
Read this first!**

Winter fishing is awesome, as long as you stay safe out there. Here are some quick ice safety reminders before you grab your gear and hit the lake. If you have additional recommendations for people new to ice fishing, add them!

No ice is ever 100% safe. Conditions change fast here. Always check as you go with a spud bar or auger.

Look for strong, clear ice. Cloudy or snow-covered ice can be much weaker.

Avoid inlets, outlets, currents, docks, and bubbler areas. These spots freeze unevenly and can stay thin even in deep winter.

Never fish alone. Bring a buddy and let someone at home know where you're going and when you'll be back.

Wear layers + bring safety gear. Ice cleats, ice picks, rope, and a whistle can literally save your life.

If you fall through: stay calm, use ice picks to pull yourself out, and roll away from the hole to spread your weight. Then get warm fast.

Stay safe!

A Michigan conservation officer practices getting out of icy water during training. Take note of the ice picks, staying low and crawling out of the entry hole.



***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 [Michigan State University Extension Center for Lakes and Streams](#) stream lines 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](mailto:latimor1@msu.edu).



Photo by Scott Brown

**Common Bladderwort**

DIVE INTO LAKE LEARNING

# INTRODUCTION TO LAKES ONLINE



**6 WEEK ONLINE COURSE  
STARTS IN JANUARY!**

[canr.msu.edu/lakesonline](http://canr.msu.edu/lakesonline)

## Introduction to Lakes Online

### Course Overview

Introduction to Lakes Online is designed for interested individuals, decision makers, local leaders, resource professionals, and lakefront property owners interested in gaining knowledge about inland lakes and connecting with others who have a similar interest. In this introductory course, participants increase their knowledge and understanding of the following six topics:

- Lake ecology
- Watersheds
- Shorelines
- Aquatic plant management
- Michigan water law
- Community involvement

Course instructors include Bindu Bhakta, Erick Elgin, Paige Filice, Dr. Jeremy Hartsock, Julia Kirkwood (EGL), Dr. Jo Latimore, Brad Neumann, Mary Reilly, and Dr. Lois Wolfson (retired).

This award-winning six-week course is offered once a year and consistently draws strong interest. Since its launch in 2014, more than 2,500 people have participated, with 98% saying they would recommend it to a friend or colleague. For many, Introduction to Lakes Online is their first experience with an online course—and it's designed to be user-friendly. The course features a simple, easy-to-navigate website, clear instructional videos, and weekly reminder emails, all of which contribute to high participant satisfaction.

Questions? Contact Paige Filice at [filicepa@msu.edu](mailto:filicepa@msu.edu).

To learn more about Intro to Lakes Online and/or to register for the class that begins in January,

[click here](#)



## Apply today for a Clean Boats, Clean Waters Grant!

We're excited to announce that for our sixth season, the Michigan Clean Boats, Clean Waters program has \$35,000 in grant funding available to support aquatic invasive species education across the state!

### Who can apply?

This grant is open to organizations committed to protecting Michigan's waters and educating boaters about aquatic invasive species. Eligible applicants include:

- Lake associations
- Watershed groups
- Local or tribal governments
- Schools
- Nature centers
- Non-profit organizations

*Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas and organizations with statewide impact are strongly encouraged to support local groups in their area.*

### What can be funded?

Projects should focus on outreach and prevention pathways for aquatic invasive species. No local match is required. We encourage applicants to contact program staff to confirm project eligibility before applying.

Funding (up to \$3,000 per project) can be used for:

- Educational signage
- Invasive species removal tools
- Outreach materials (e.g., swag, handouts)
- Supplies for booths or presentations

*Note: Ineligible expenses include invasive species eradication, mechanical boat washing stations, and indirect staffing costs (e.g., fringe benefits).*

### Application details

This is a competitive funding opportunity. Applications will be reviewed and ranked based on group eligibility, project significance, anticipated outcomes and target audiences. Learn more and apply on the [Clean Boats, Clean Waters grant website](#).

Deadline to apply: January 30, 2026

### Questions?

Contact Kelsey Bockelman at [bockelm4@msu.edu](mailto:bockelm4@msu.edu).

Learn more about this funding opportunity

Apply today! ►



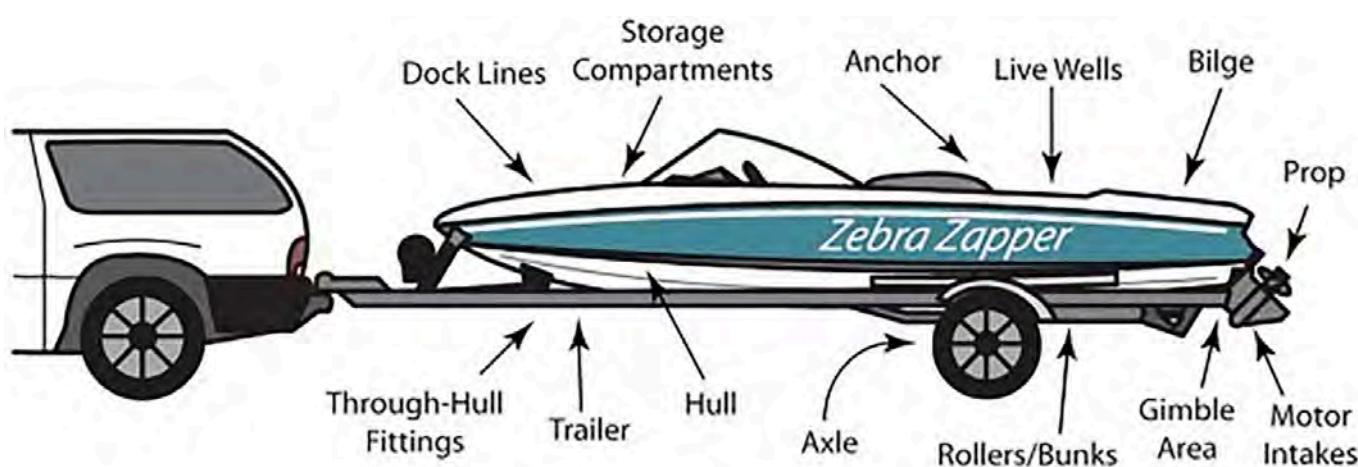
## What We Would Like Readers of this Newsletter to Know about Michigan Waterfront Alliance

### Our Mission:

Michigan Waterfront Alliance (MWA) is a 501(c)4 non-profit corporation formed to protect, preserve, and promote wise use of the inland waters of the State of Michigan. Our mission will be accomplished by active participation in the legislative process, court cases, and/or direct involvement with related state agencies or departments. This membership-enabled corporation maintains the ability to influence legislation through lobbying, an action that is not permitted by 501(c)3 non-profit organizations.

- Michigan Waterfront Alliance is one of just a few non-profit organizations that is permitted by law to influence our state's legislative process in regards to the enactment of state laws, regulations, or policies whose implementation and enforcement ultimately have a direct impact on Michigan's vast natural legacy of high quality freshwater resources by lobbying. Lobbying is defined as the act of attempting to influence decisions made by government officials. Enabled through direct communication and pro-active advocacy, lobbying involves various activities aimed at persuading policymakers, especially state legislators, to support or oppose specific legislation, regulations, and/or other government actions.
- The vast majority of the revenue derived through membership or by donations to Michigan Waterfront Alliance is utilized to compensate our Lansing-based lobbyist - Michigan's longest serving multi-client lobbying firm, Karoub Associates.
- Not a single person who works for Michigan Waterfront Alliance, including the Officers and Directors of our Board of Directors, receive any form of monetary compensation.

- Those who work to enable the day-to-day operation of Michigan Waterfront Alliance are motivated by the desire to contribute in some modest way to the conservation of Michigan's extraordinary valuable natural legacy of high quality inland lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands.
- It is important for our readers to understand that most of the revenue we receive through the payment of individual, association, or corporate dues as well as donations to Michigan Waterfront Alliance go directly to support our Karoub Associates enabled Lansing-based lobbying efforts that occur on behalf of our freshwater resources, associations, and lakefront property owners (riparians). A small percentage (about 10%) of our total revenue goes to fund the payment of non-discretionary administrative expenses.
- The fact is, only a small fraction of the thousands of readers of this newsletter have thus far chosen to become individual, association, or corporate members, and/or to donate to Michigan Waterfront Alliance.
- In order for Michigan Waterfront Alliance to sustain our commitment to working on behalf of the preservation of our precious inland lakes, rivers, streams, and wetlands, and the protection of the riparian rights of lakefront property owners, we desperately need many more of our readers to make the wise decision to become Individual, Association, or Corporate members, and/ or to make a generous donation to our efforts by becoming a Bronze, Silver, or Gold MI Healthy Lakes Champion today!!!



### Bringing a boat

When a watercraft is part of your fishing routine, remember to “Clean, Drain and Dry” boats, trailers and all equipment and gear after each use on any lake, river or stream. State law requires:

- Making sure watercraft and trailers are free of all aquatic organisms and plants before transporting or launching.
- Removing drain plugs and draining all water from bilges, ballast tanks and live wells before transporting watercraft over land.

Drying boats, trailers and gear is an important step to ensure live organisms, like hard-to-see zebra mussel larvae, plant fragments and didymo cells, don't travel to the next fishing spot. Between sites, do one of the following:

- When possible, dry boats, trailers and gear in the sun for five to seven days.
- Wash boats and trailers with a pressure washer.
- Apply a chemical disinfectant like those listed above.
- Dry surfaces with a towel.

Preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species is the responsibility of everyone who uses Michigan's valuable fresh-water resources. For more information on invasive species and prevention methods, visit [Michigan.gov/Invasives](http://Michigan.gov/Invasives).

*Michigan's Invasive Species Program is cooperatively implemented by the Michigan departments of Agriculture and Rural Development; Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy; and Natural Resources.*



## Events Listing

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

**December 15, Noon: Managing Eurasian watermilfoil with burlap barrier: Response of biological communities and nutrients.** Presented by Ann Briem, Grand Valley State University. Host, Benzie Conservation District.

NEW December 17, 11:00 AM: [Ecology and life history of Midwestern crayfishes.](#)  
Presented by Chris Taylor, Illinois Natural History Survey. Host: Invasive Crayfish Collaborative.

January 14, 9:00 AM: [In a stranglehold: Can we prevent invasive mussels from muscling in on native populations?](#) Presented by Michael Hillary, Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Host: Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

January - March, 2026: [Introduction to Lakes Online course.](#) (6 week course. *Enroll by January 27.*) Host: Michigan State University Extension Center for Lakes and Streams. \$

February 17-19, 2026: [2026 Invasive Species Forum.](#) Host: Invasive Species Centre.



## 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?
- 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 Michigan Waterfront Alliance today !!!](#)**

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**---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**

**M**ichigan **N**atural **S**horeline **P**artnership

[Click here](#)



**BRONZE**

MI Healthy Lakes

Champion

**\$250**

**SILVER**

MI Healthy Lakes

Champion

**\$500**

**GOLD**

MI Healthy Lakes

Champion

**\$1000**

[Donate](#)

[Donate](#)

[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](#)



**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.

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.

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**