

---

## Michigan Waterfront Alliance Update for Monday, December 1, 2025

1 message

---



Photo by Scott Brown

---

**Welcome to the Michigan Waterfront Alliance**

**Update for Monday, December 1, 2025**

---



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

**P. O. Box 392**

**Mecosta, MI 49332-0392**

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

---



**Bi-Partisan Legislation to Fund Efforts to Eliminate Quagga Mussels and  
Restore Healthy Great Lakes Fisheries Soon to Be Introduced in Congress**

**by Scott Brown**

**MWA e-Newsletter Editor**

**In an effort to give scientists and tribal leaders in the Laurentian Great Lakes region the tools they need to combat the now massive infestation of exotic invasive quagga mussels that have severely degraded the capacity of lower Great Lakes aquatic ecosystems to**



support once abundant fisheries, U. S. Representatives Debbie Dingell (D- Ann Arbor) and Tim Walberg (R – Tipton) intend to introduce legislation in the near future that if enacted would dedicate \$500 million in federal funding to long term efforts focused on eliminating the rapidly reproducing mussels. Representing a rare bi-partisan issue, if enacted, the legislation would modify a 1956 program used to combat invasive sea lamprey, an eel-like fish that invaded the Great Lakes in the early 1900s.

If passed, the “Save Great Lakes Fish Act of 2025” would provide funding that would be distributed over the course of the next decade. The federal funds would facilitate scientific research, and the development of effective control methods and restoration strategies intended to eliminate an astronomical number of quagga mussels and ultimately restore the capacity of Great Lakes ecosystems to support abundant whitefish populations and other commercially harvested fish species.

Entering the Great Lakes as exotic aquatic invasive species in the 1980’s, rapidly reproducing quagga mussels are widespread and now number in the quadrillions. Filter feeding invasive quagga mussels have severely affected the capacity of once prolific aquatic ecosystems to support abundant population of whitefish and yellow perch by effectively filtering out the phytoplankton that serves as a food source for microscopic aquatic insects commonly referred to as zooplankton that serve as a vital source of food for the small prey fish that sustain whitefish, yellow perch and many other important fish species. Populations of white fish, for example, an important commercially harvested species, declined by as much as 80% in the past forty years.

---



Photo by John Picken

## **The ‘Great Northern Diver’ - Common Loon Sightings Becoming Increasingly Rare in the Great Lakes Region**

by Scott Brown  
MWA e-Newsletter Editor

Prompting the return of a flood of fond memories of northern pike and walleye fishing with my son and grandson while on fly-in fishing trips to northern Ontario’s Shabuskwia Lake, the other worldly sound of a loon’s call has always held special meaning for this aging baby boomer. Although I have not visited this gorgeous wilderness lake in many years, my son and wildlife biologist grandson tell me that loon sightings even in the far north have become increasingly rare.

Although there are five species of loon in North America – all member of the Family Gaviidae, including Red-throated Loon, Pacific Loon, Yellow-billed Loon, and Arctic Loon, the most abundant is the Common Loon (scientific name: *Gavia immer*). The International Union for the Conservation of Nature reports that the majority of the approximately 640,000 common loons that remain on earth are found in Canada.

Though they are awkward on land due to the fact their legs are placed far back on their bodies, common loons have evolved as water birds that venture onto shore only to mate and incubate eggs, and learn how to dive long before they learn how to fly. Though the name loon derives from their goofy, awkward walk, they are often referred to as 'great northern divers'. Capable of staying submerged for up to five minutes as they forage for fish and aquatic insects, loons are particularly well adept at hunting underwater due to their solid bones that make them less buoyant, their capacity to rapidly expel air from their lungs, and their ability to flatten their feathers in order to expel air from their plumage. The capacity to stay submerged for long periods is also enabled by their extraordinary physiological capacity to slow their heart rate while diving in order to conserve oxygen. The red eyes of loons have also evolved to allow them to detect fish and other prey in the low light conditions that are often present in water depths of up to fifteen feet. Empowered by their capacity to rapidly descend and to swim at an extraordinary fast pace while underwater, loons are considered highly effective hunters that are capable of consuming a large quantity of small fish in relatively short order. Biologists familiar with the unique bird species have estimated that a single set of loon parents and their two chicks are capable of eating a half ton of fish in a single fifteen-week season. Due to their reliance upon diving to depths of up to fifteen feet to forage for food, loons prefer healthy inland lakes hosting relatively clear water and healthy fisheries. Loons are known to shy away from inland lakes suffering from poor water clarity. Frequent loon sightings in a particular region are considered a reliable indicator of the presence of large, healthy inland lakes hosting abundant fish populations, relatively clear waters, and the existence of undisturbed natural shorelines.

Graced with relatively small wings in comparison to their size and weight, loons are attracted to large lakes that provide them with an opportunity to takeoff into the wind and skitter across the water's surface for a long distance before creating enough aerodynamic lift to eventually become airborne. Once airborne, however, common loons are capable of flying at speeds of up to 70 miles per hour. It is interesting to note that their need for long, water-based take off 'runways' has caused migrating common loons to become stranded as they sometimes mistake wet highways and parking lots as rivers and lakes.

Due to their relatively large bodies, small wings, and the fact that their fast flight requires a lot of energy that must be replenished along the way, common loons are considered a medium-distance migrants. The common loons of the northern United States and Canada migrate from lakes to the coastal oceanic waters of the Pacific or Atlantic. The loons of western Canada and Alaska migrate to the Pacific Coast ranging from Alaska's Aleutian Islands to Mexico's Baja Peninsula. Great Lakes region common loons migrate to the Gulf of Mexico or Florida coasts. Common loons that inhabit the lakes of eastern Canada migrate to the North Atlantic Coast.

Sharp declines in the abundance of all five loon species in North America have thus far been primarily attributed to the loss of critical habitat caused by steadily increasing rates of near shore residential development that has been occurring on thousands of larger northern temperate inland lakes located in the United States and Canada. Intensive lakefront development facilitated loss of optimal loon habitat and a commensurate loss of preferred nesting and rearing habitat is one of the primary reasons that loon populations have experienced a steady decline over the course of the past fifty years. Ecologists familiar with the decline of loon populations in North America also indicate that multiple stressors including the not yet well understood influences of climate change, diminished fish populations, acidification of inland lakes, and the loss of eggs and chicks to an increasing number of scavenging predators have also contributed to the decline of loons. It is important to point out that common loon populations in the Laurentian Great Lakes region have also experienced decline due to the onset of increasingly frequent outbreaks of Type-E botulism that has caused massive annual die-offs of common loons, and other fish-eating birds in the past twenty-five years.

---



## **EGLE announces eight grants to protect or improve water quality**

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) announced today about \$2.9 million in [Nonpoint Source \(NPS\) Program](#) grants. These funds will support eight projects that will prevent, reduce, or eliminate polluted runoff and other nonpoint sources of pollution – caused when rain, snowmelt, or wind carry pollutants from land into lakes, streams, or wetlands.

The purpose of these grants is to carry out locally developed watershed management priorities that EGLE has approved to help restore impaired waters and protect high-quality waters by reducing NPS sediments, nutrients, bacteria, and other contaminants. These Nonpoint Pollution Control grants are funded through the Renew Michigan Fund and Section 319 of the Federal Clean Water Act. The projects recommended for funding will:

- Address high levels of bacteria from human sources in the Thornapple River Watershed with outreach to homeowners, technical assistance, and funding for the repair and replacement of failing on-site septic systems.
- Replace an undersized railroad-stream crossing in the Grand Traverse Bay Watershed to restore proper stream dimensions and sediment transport mechanisms to improve stream health and natural stream function.
- Implement livestock best management practices in the Ottawa-Stony North and Munuscong River watersheds to address sources of sediment, nutrient, and *E. coli* impairments. Practices will include improvements to on-site manure management, restricting livestock access to surface water, and adding livestock stream crossings.
- Develop an Inland Waterway stewardship guide to educate residents and recreational users across six major waterbodies including Crooked, Pickerel, Burt, and Mullet lakes as well as Indian and Cheboygan rivers on best management practices for reducing nutrient runoff, managing invasive species, and protecting shorelines. The project will leverage resources from statewide initiatives to drive action and increase public awareness and stewardship.
- Protect approximately 300 acres in the Grand River Watershed and 552 acres in the Manistee River Watershed with water quality-based permanent conservation easements. Combined, these easements will prevent 33.6 tons of sediment, 542 pounds of nitrogen, and 112 pounds of phosphorus from entering Michigan waterways.

The following Michigan based organizations have been awarded funding:

- Legacy Land Conservancy, Ann Arbor: \$377,038

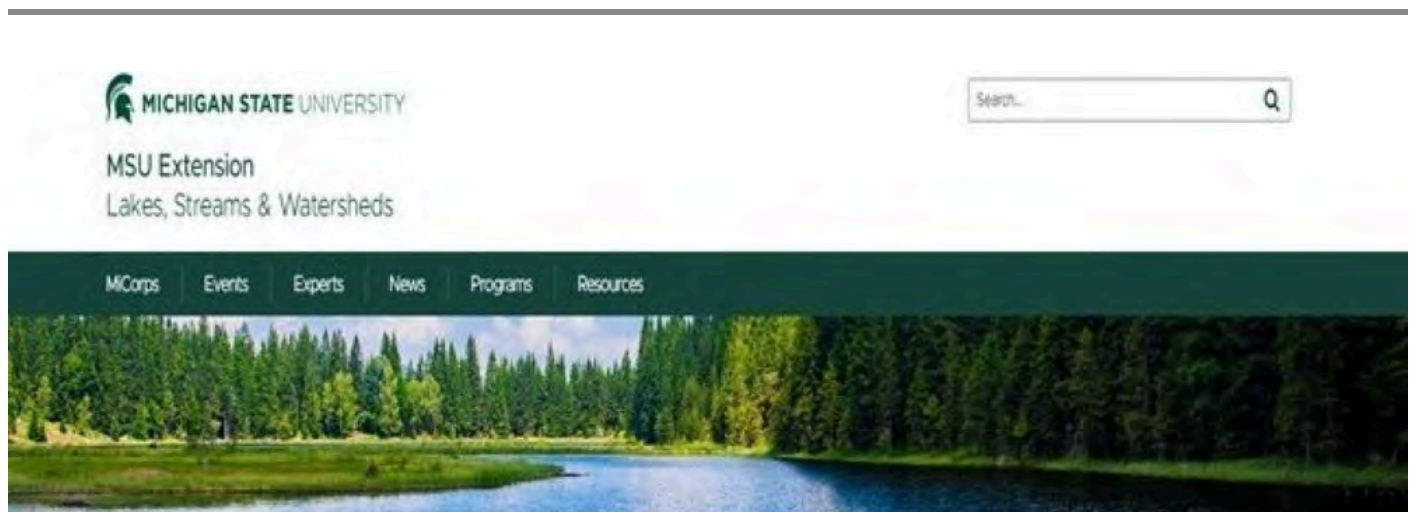


- Washtenaw County Soil Conservation District, Ann Arbor: \$383,484
- Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy, Galesburg: \$239,216
- Barry Conservation District, Hastings: \$339,462
- Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, Petoskey: \$45,356
- Chippewa Luce Mackinac Conservation District, Sault Ste. Marie: \$500,000
- Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, Traverse City: \$415,673
- The Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay, Traverse City: \$614,993

A total of 17 applications requesting about \$6.4 million were received in response to the request for proposals (RFP).

The grants are issued by EGLE's NPS Program, which helps local stakeholders reduce pollution and excess runoff by supporting efforts to develop and launch watershed management plans.

The NPS Program typically issues an RFP each year for this funding source, with the next available opportunity to be released in January 2026. The RFP will be posted at [Michigan.gov/NPS](https://Michigan.gov/NPS).



*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.

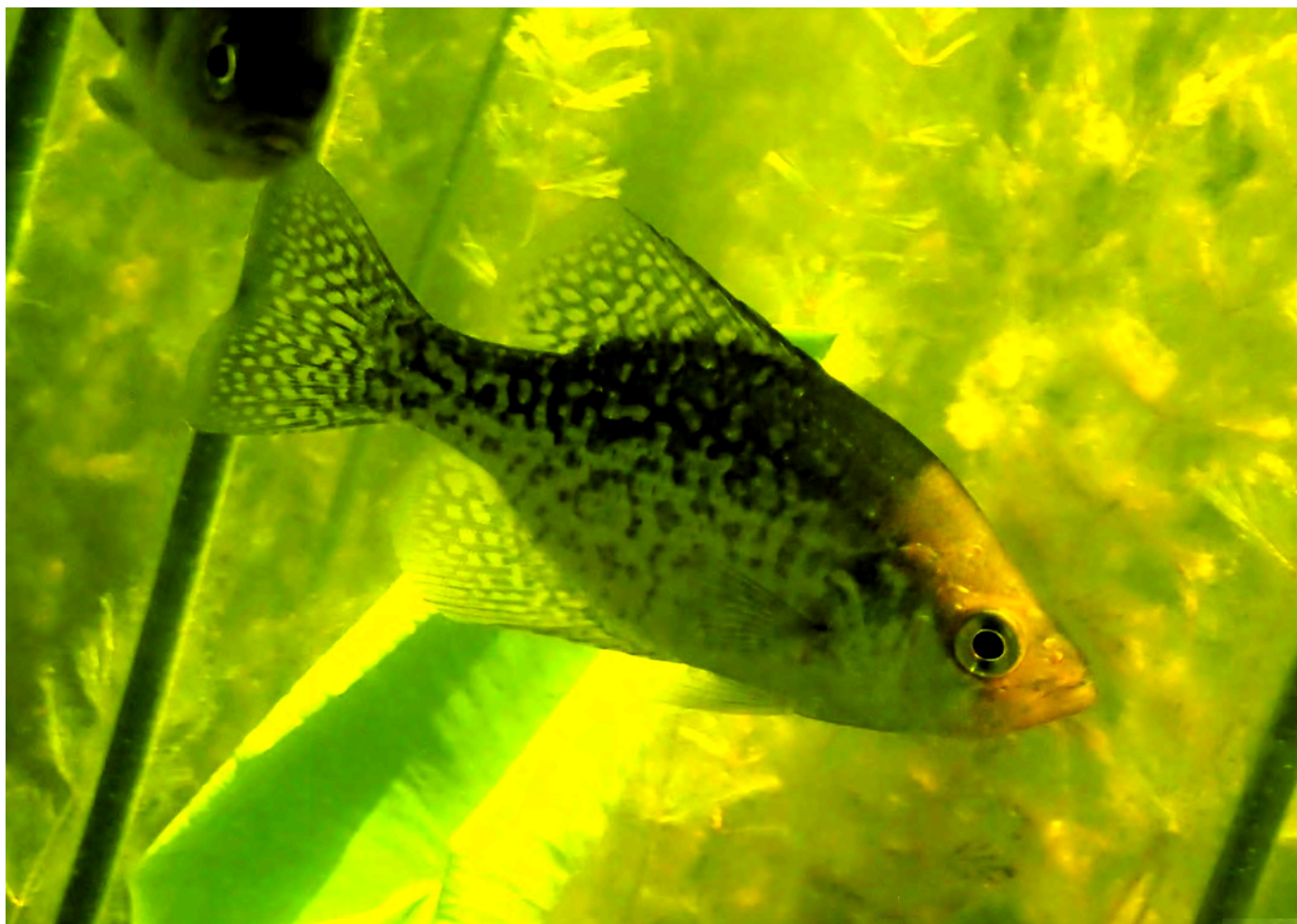
To achieve this vision, the Center will welcome affiliated faculty from various departments at MSU and will invite external stakeholder input. Affiliates and stakeholders will support the work of the Center by identifying emerging issues and assisting with the prioritization of research and education 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).

---



## **Black Crappie**

**Scientific Name: *Pomoxis nigromaculatis***

---



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 (EGLE), 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! ►**









## Spiny Naiad

Scientific Name: *Najas marina*

---



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

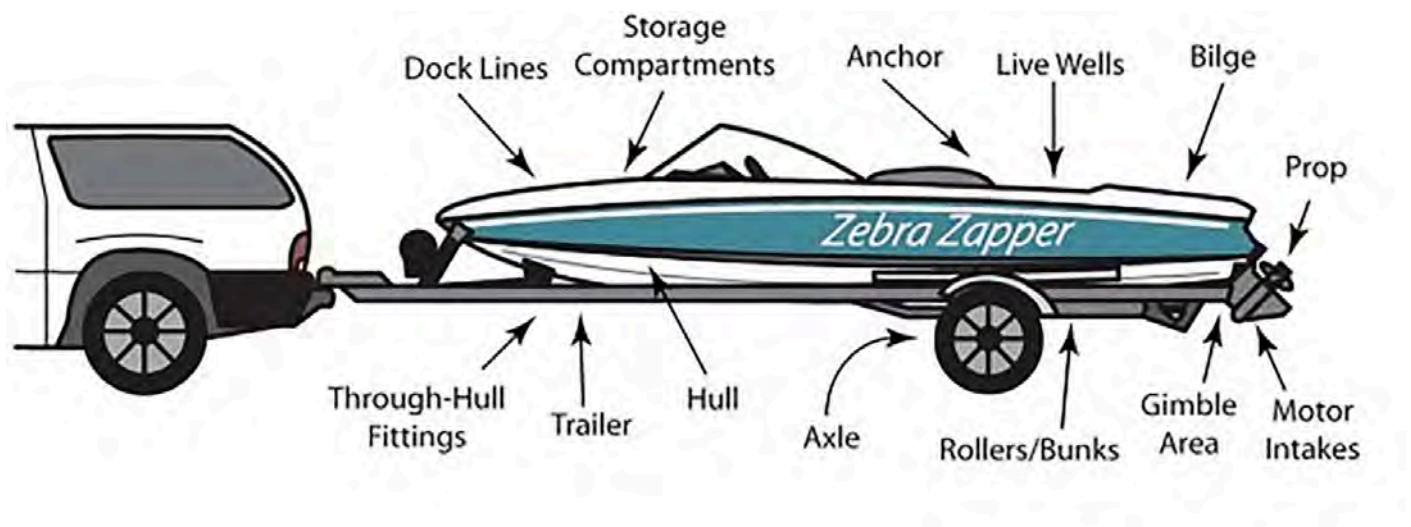
#### **Our Mission:**

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](https://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 1

Noon: [Golden mussel planning and response](#). Presented by Thomas Woolf, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Dennis Zabagalo, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency; Chris Scianni, California State Lands Commission; Justin Bush, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife; Martha Volkoff, California Department of Fish and Wildlife; and Kate Wyman-Grothem, US Fish and Wildlife Service. Host: Invasive Mussel Collaborative.

December 2-4

[2025 Great Lakes Virtual PFAS Summit](#). Host: Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy.

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.

December 5

2025 Annual MiCorps Conference (*Michigan's volunteer lake and stream monitoring program*). Host: Michigan Clean Water Corps.

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 !!!

---



**---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 Natural Shoreline Partnership

[Click here](#)

---



MICHIGAN  
WATERFRONT  
ALLIANCE



**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

---