



Welcome to the Michigan Waterfront Alliance

Update for Monday, March 16, 2026



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

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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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Michigan boaters could help fight invasive species through a new bill

Gongwer News Service

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

A bill that would bring back special boat decals that would help fund aquatic invasive species removal in the state was discussed by the House Natural Resources and Tourism Committee on Wednesday.

The bill, HB 5308 , introduced by Rep. Ken Borton, R-Gaylord, would reinstate the authorization of selling Great Lakes Protection Specialty Watercraft decals to Michiganders.

Purchasing these decals could increase the revenue for the Department of Natural Resources

to address invasive species in the state's waterways.

"This bill offers a voluntary way for individuals to help protect one of Michigan's greatest treasures-our Great Lakes and countless inland lakes, without increasing fees or imposing new financial burdens," he said.

He said this program existed in the early 2000s but was terminated due to insufficient sales of decals. The bill would reinstate the program.

A decal for a boat would cost \$35 with \$10 covering administrative costs at the Department of State while the remaining \$25 would go directly to the Michigan Great Lakes Protection Fund, which supports research and efforts to remove aquatic invasive species, he said.

Bob Frye, President of the Michigan Waterfront Alliance, testified in support of the bill. In 2016, they sent letters to over 220 lake associations and gathered enough signatures to challenge the funding at the time and get an invasive species task force established.

He said the negative economic impacts of invasive species on inland lakes are significant. They lower property values, tourism, and create problems for the fishing community. The environmental control costs of killing and removing certain invasive species also are "extraordinary," he said.

"Just to control the Eurasian watermilfoil in Houghton Lake is half a million to a million dollars every other year," he said.

There also aren't sufficient funds for boat inspections, he said. Boats can accidentally harbor invasive species when traveling from one place to another.

A survey conducted in 2012 reported that over 76% of boaters would agree to voluntarily contribute \$20 a year to fight invasive species in the state, which indicates that the boat decals would be supported, he said.

"It's a big problem, and this might be one way to help address the problem," Frye said. Rep. Jennifer Wortz, R-Quincy, asked if the bill intended to facilitate partnerships with conservation districts across the state.

"Conservation districts would be a great place to sell decals and making those accessible along with licenses," she said.

Rep. Regina Weiss, D-Oak Park, suggested that the design of the decals be determined by a

student contest in the same way the Michigan "I-Voted" stickers were in 2024.

Borton and Frye both thought that was a "great idea."

Vice chair Rep. Alicia St. Germaine, R-Harrison Township, asked how many invasive species

there are in Michigan and said she appreciated the bill.

Frye said there are around 180 different invasive species in the state that affect waterways and the land.

Rep. Noah Arbit, D-West Bloomfield, asked if there were any conversations being had about raising the cost of a decal to better fund initiatives. He said oftentimes, programs that are meant to help Michigan's lakes and waterways don't have enough funding due to how inexpensive licenses currently are.

Borton said there are, and someone from the boating industry is planning to testify in support

of raising fees in a committee meeting next week.

Another bill, HB 5301, was discussed in the meeting that would allow hunters to use flashlights when hunting.

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Photo by Scott Brown

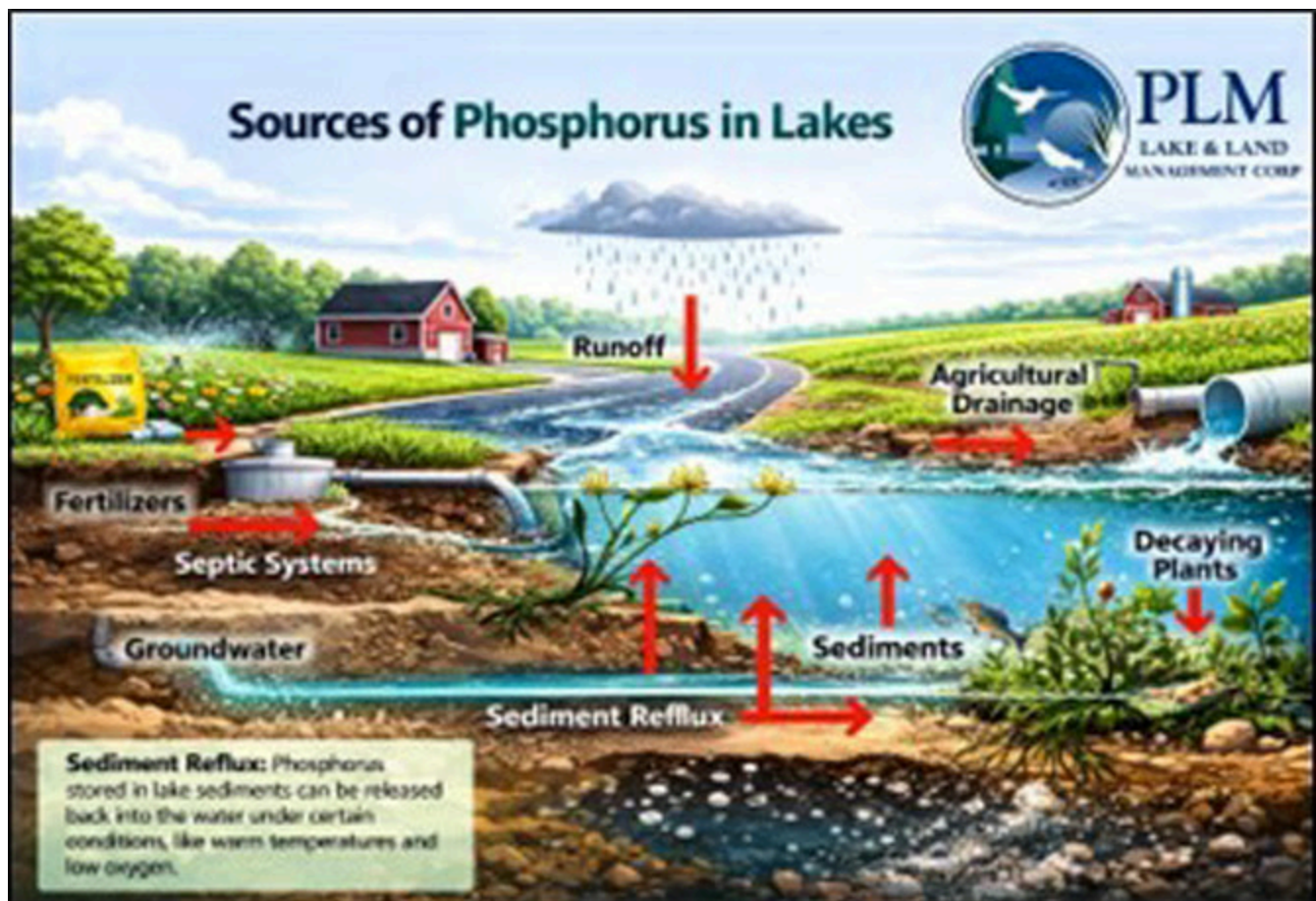
Eurasian Watermilfoil

Spring Phosphorus Loading and Lake Health

by Ashlee Haviland, PLM Lake and Land Management

Each spring, melting snow and seasonal rainfall reconnect our surrounding landscapes with nearby lakes and streams. During this period, nutrients that accumulate across the watershed, particularly phosphorus, can be transported into surface waters through runoff and drainage pathways. This process, known as external loading, is one of the primary drivers of nutrient enrichment in lakes.

External sources of phosphorus include fertilizers, soil erosion, stormwater runoff, septic systems, and organic material entering waterways. While spring runoff can introduce new phosphorus each year, many lakes also contain large reserves of legacy phosphorus that have accumulated over decades.



The Role of Internal Phosphorus Loading

As phosphorus enters a lake from surrounding watershed inputs, it eventually settles into bottom sediments where it accumulates through the breakdown of aquatic vegetation, algal

biomass, and other organic matter. Over time, this accumulation forms a substantial reservoir of legacy phosphorus that can persist in sediments for many years.

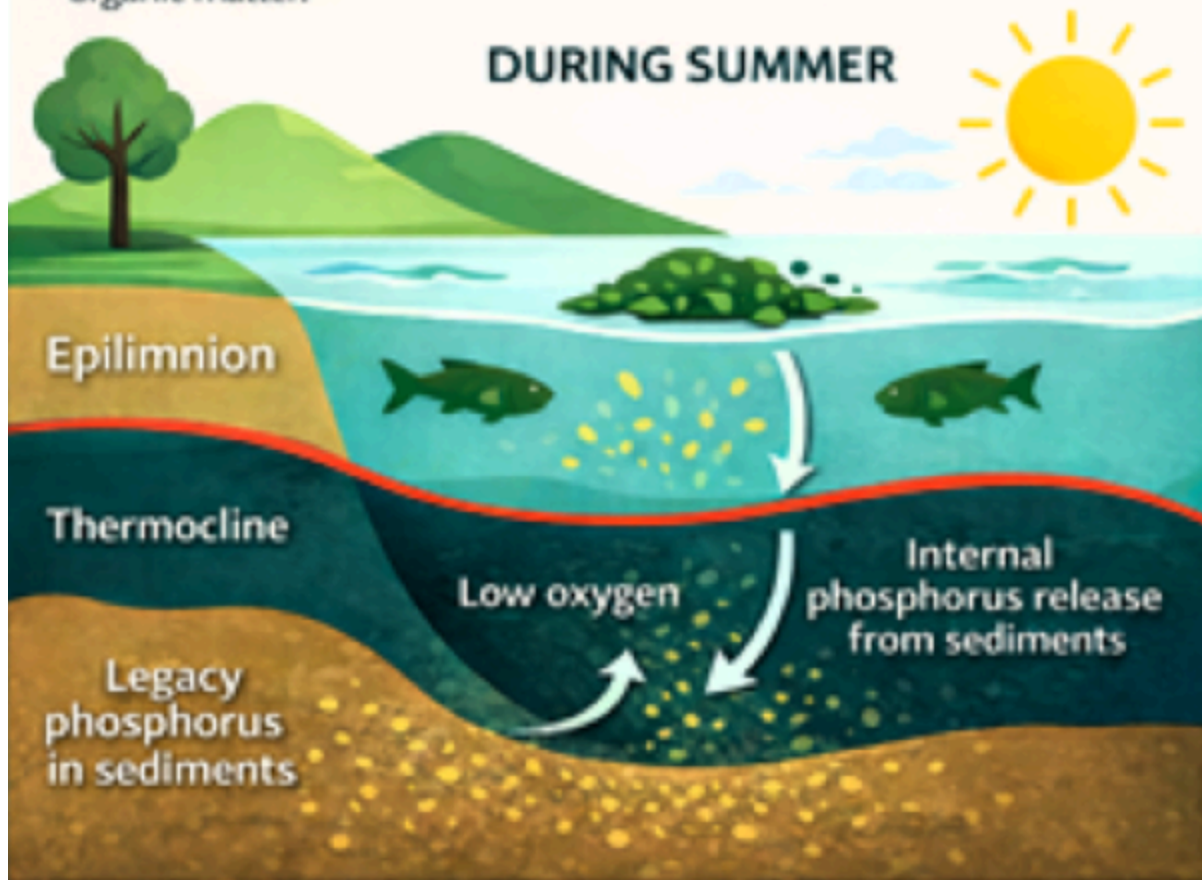
During the summer, many lakes develop thermal stratification, where the water column separates into a warm surface layer (epilimnion) and a colder bottom layer (hypolimnion), separated by the thermocline. Stratification limits vertical mixing and isolates bottom waters from atmospheric oxygen inputs. As microbial respiration and organic matter decomposition continue in the hypolimnion, dissolved oxygen concentrations near the sediment-water interface can decline to hypoxic or anoxic conditions.

Under anoxic conditions, phosphorus that is bound to iron compounds in the sediments can be chemically released into the overlying water. This process, referred to as internal phosphorus loading, allows previously stored sediment phosphorus to diffuse back into the water column where it becomes biologically available for algae and cyanobacteria growth.

Consequently, lakes with substantial phosphorus accumulation in their sediments may continue to experience nutrient-driven water quality impairments even after external inputs decline, as phosphorus can be remobilized from sediments during periods of stratification.

THE ROLE OF INTERNAL PHOSPHOROUS LOADING

Over time, phosphorus entering a lake from watershed sources settles into bottom sediments where it accumulates through the decomposition of aquatic vegetation, algal biomass, and other organic matter.



As a result, even when external phosphorus inputs are reduced, lakes with significant sediment phosphorus accumulation may continue to experience nutrient-driven water quality issues because phosphorus stored in sediments can be repeatedly mobilized during stratified conditions.

Nutrient Dynamics

Phosphorus commonly accumulates in lake sediments over time from plant decay, organic matter decomposition, and long-term watershed inputs. When environmental conditions such as low oxygen or sediment disturbance occur, this legacy phosphorus can be

released back into the water column and fuel algae growth. Aeration may temporarily suppress internal phosphorus release by improving oxygen conditions near the lake bottom; however, it does not permanently bind or remove phosphorus. Because the nutrient remains stored in sediments, aeration functions primarily as a temporary suppression tool rather than a long-term solution for internal phosphorus loading.

Binding Phosphorus in Sediments

An alternative management strategy involves the use of lanthanum-modified bentonite, a specialized clay designed to bind phosphorus within lake sediments. Lanthanum has a strong affinity for phosphate, forming a stable chemical bond that prevents phosphorus from re-entering the water column.

Over time, these lanthanum–phosphate complexes transition into stable rare earth minerals such as rhabdophane and monazite. These minerals effectively lock phosphorus into the sediment, preventing it from fueling future algae blooms.

Why This Matters

Excess phosphorus can drive eutrophication, a process that leads to excessive algae growth and declining water quality. In some cases, nutrient-rich conditions support harmful algal blooms capable of producing toxins such as microcystin. Exposure to these toxins can cause skin irritation, gastrointestinal illness, liver damage, and illness in pets and wildlife. Beyond public health concerns, nutrient enrichment can degrade aquatic habitat by reducing oxygen levels, altering plant communities, and disrupting fish and wildlife populations.

Looking Forward

Proactive phosphorus management can help prevent water quality problems before they occur. Addressing nutrient inputs early is often more cost-effective than restoring severely impaired lakes later. Even when restoration is necessary, phased management strategies can allow improvements to begin while remaining within realistic budgets. National lake monitoring programs have consistently identified nutrient pollution as one of the most

widespread stressors affecting freshwater systems. Incorporating phosphorus management into lake and pond management plans is therefore essential for protecting water quality, recreation, and aquatic habitat. As spring arrives and our watersheds begin to flow again, it is an ideal time for lake communities to consider how nutrient management strategies can support long-term lake health.



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY



New software promises better process for large-quantity water withdrawal requests

***by Lena Pappas, Groundwater and Geologic Services Manager
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE)***

March 12, 2026

Preserving the Great Lakes is a collaborative endeavor, where each state and province within the basin adheres to the Great Lakes Agreement and Compact to protect this vital shared water resource. Sometimes, protection also requires new perspectives and new tools.

Historically, management efforts have often considered each Great Lake in isolation, overlooking the critical hydrologic connection between these surface waters and groundwater.

But groundwater within Michigan is comparable in volume to Lake Huron. It's not a separate system but an essential and unifying component of the earth-and-water puzzle that defines the Great Lakes Basin. In Michigan alone, more than half of all residences and businesses depend on groundwater.

Ensuring the long-term viability of state water resources including groundwater requires tools flexible enough to account for diverse hydrogeologic conditions and accessible enough to ensure transparency and reliability for those who use them.

Local, state, and federal partnerships are critical to co-developing tools that can encompass these needs. Recognizing this, the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) collaborated with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) to develop a new software tool called pycap-dss. This tool fills the current gap by providing insights into how surface water and

groundwater interact: pycap-dss can estimate both groundwater drawdown and related reductions to streamflow.

In addition to providing robust, accurate information to agencies responsible for ensuring the long-term sustainability of Michigan's water supply, these tools must help build trust with users.

The USGS published pycap-dss in line with open software principles for transparency and regulatory accountability that help ensure these goals are met. Michigan's Water Use Program, which regulates large quantity water withdrawals, works with the Water Use Advisory Council (WUAC) to advance and improve the Michigan Water Conservation and Efficiency Program established in 2008 to meet the state's obligations under the Great Lakes Compact and Agreement. The WUAC and its Water Conservation and Efficiency Committee play key roles in water management and water conservation and efficiency in Michigan. WUAC Tri-Chair Pat Staskiewicz said the release of open-source decision support software is a great example of USGS leadership in water management.

Staskiewicz, who serves as public utilities director of the Ottawa County Road Commission, also said improvements to the speed and accuracy of decision making by regulators are important, and doing so openly and transparently is vital for trust among regulated communities.

Assessing Groundwater Withdrawals

Large-quantity withdrawals (defined as 100,000 gallons or more per day) from Michigan groundwater or surface waters are prohibited from adversely impacting the waters of the state.

When someone applies to EGLE to establish or enlarge a large-quantity withdrawal, the Water Withdrawal Assessment Tool (WWAT) models the potential impact on nearby water resources. It's central to Michigan's process for regulating large-quantity withdrawals.

In the fall of 2025, EGLE announced the release of the redeveloped WWAT that integrates the pycap-dss software. This updated WWAT will serve as the interface for more than half of

Michigan's large-quantity water withdrawal registrations. Water users who register pumps that can draw more than 2 million gallons a day are required to apply for a 327 Permit as opposed to registering within the WWAT. This updated tool will make it easier for users who are interested in evaluating their registration options and integrating public or privately collected data into the process.

Its streamlined, user-friendly platform not only visualizes resource availability but also supports data-driven, collaborative decision making, aligning regulatory requirements with recommendations from the WUAC.

Stakeholders include the agricultural community. Michigan produces more than 300 commodities, making it the second-most agriculturally diverse U.S. state, according to the Michigan Farm Bureau. The group supports transparent, science-based management of water resources to protect natural resources and provide the water needed to grow crops and raise livestock.

Laura Campbell, Farm Bureau senior conservation and regulatory relations specialist and WUAC tri-chair, said she's encouraged by the implementation of software tools like pycap-dss to improve the WWAT and increase flexibility in water withdrawal decisions. WUAC Tri-Chair Dr. Bryan Burroughs said the new tool reinforces the integrity of important regulation, bolstering trust and confidence in outcomes.

The challenge of groundwater science and resource management is not unique to Michigan. Every state and province within the Great Lakes Basin must estimate local groundwater levels as part of efforts to protect the sustainability of shared water resources.

Originally developed for WDNR and EGLE, pycap-dss shows promise for increasing regional coordination. Since its release, the tool has garnered interest from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for use in its water resource assessments.

EGLE remains committed to collaborative, science-based regulation of Michigan's water resources – work that continues to play a critical role in supporting the state's economy, environment, and communities.

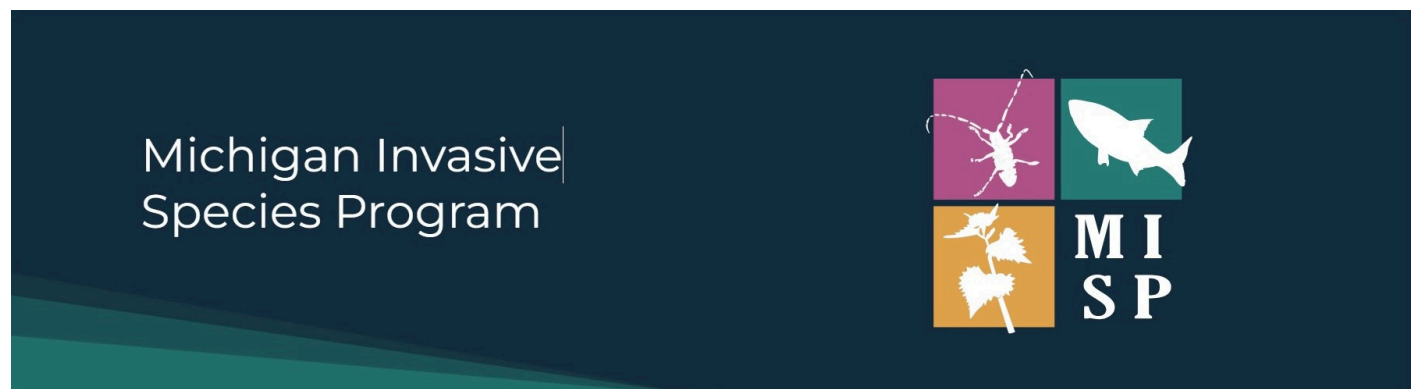
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March 2, 2026

Contact: [Joanne Foreman](#), 517-284-5814 or [Kelsey Dietz](#), 517-388-8473

State awards \$2.4 million for invasive species prevention and control

The state of Michigan today announced that 27 projects will share \$2.4 million in funding through the [Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program](#) for efforts that address the prevention, detection, eradication and control of aquatic (water-based) and terrestrial (land-based) invasive species.

To date, over \$42 million has been awarded to support 328 projects undertaken by units of government, nonprofit organizations and institutions.

The program – cooperatively implemented by the Michigan departments of Agriculture and Rural Development; Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy; and Natural Resources – has four key objectives:

- Preventing the introduction of new invasive species.
- Strengthening the statewide invasive species early detection and response network.
- Limiting the spread of recently confirmed invasive species.
- Managing and controlling widespread, established invasive species.

Support in every Michigan county

This year, grants will support each of Michigan's 22 regional [cooperative invasive species management areas](#), the network of partnership organizations working to manage and control invasive species, actively serving all 83 counties in the state.

Each CISMA will receive \$70,000 in annual support to provide education and technical assistance to landowners. Twelve CISMAs will receive additional funds for survey and treatment of high-priority invasive species including red swamp crayfish, water-primrose, wild parsnip, black swallowwort, knotweeds and kudzu. Grants to CISMAs represent \$1.7 million in this cycle.

Statewide detection and response

Grant funds also will support early detection and response efforts for [watch list invasive species](#) – those that pose an immediate or potential threat to Michigan's economy, environment or human health and either have never been confirmed in the wild in Michigan or have a limited known distribution:

- Surveying and treating hemlock woolly adelgid on the northern edge of the infestation in Benzie, Grand Traverse, Leelanau and Manistee counties along the Lake Michigan shoreline.
- Conducting survey and treatment of mile-a-minute weed infestations in Calhoun County.
- Surveying for highly invasive hydrilla in southwest Michigan waters near the known infestation in Berrien County.

Prevention efforts

Funding also will support efforts to prevent the spread of invasive species:

- Continuing support for the [Clean Boats, Clean Waters program](#), including its grant program and mobile boat wash crew, to educate boaters and anglers on invasive species prevention actions they can take.

- Supporting continued public reporting of invasive species detections and a growing library of identification resources and training opportunities through the [Midwest Invasive Species Information Network](#), housed at Michigan State University.

Program progress

Initiated in 2014, the state Legislature annually provides funding for the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program to support prevention, detection and control efforts across the state.

Through grant-funded efforts:

- More than 720,000 acres of land and water have been surveyed for invasive species.
- More than 60,000 acres have been treated for invasive terrestrial and aquatic plants.
- Through direct contact, including face-to-face interactions at boat washes, workshops, trainings and other events, 531,000 people have been reached with information about invasive species.
- An additional 52 million contacts were achieved through grantees' indirect outreach efforts, including mail, newspapers, social media and handouts.

Over \$8 million requested

The program began accepting grant applications for this funding cycle in September 2025. A total of 55 applications were received, requesting approximately \$8.3 million in support.

The [full list of grant recipients, project descriptions and award amounts](#) is available on the Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program website at Michigan.gov/MISGP.

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.



Legislation to Establish a First Ever Statewide Septic Code Introduced in the Michigan State Senate

If Passed into Law, Senate Bill 771 Would Help Protect Michigan's Fragile Inland Lakes, Rivers, Streams and Ground Water from Raw Sewage Flowing from Hundreds of Thousands of Failing Septic Systems in Michigan

**by Scott Brown
MWA E- Newsletter Editor**

Introduced by MI State Senator Sam Singh (D-28) and referred to the MI Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Agriculture on Wednesday, January 28, 2026, if passed into law, Senate Bill 771 would establish Michigan's first-ever comprehensive framework for the oversight and on-going maintenance of septic systems (on-site wastewater treatment systems). As the only state in the United States of America without a statewide septic system code, the language of Senate Bill 771 will serve to modernize Michigan's substantially outdated approach to septic system oversight and help protect the health of communities and the tens of thousands of freshwater resources that serve those communities.

The steadily escalating environmental and public health threat in Michigan is derived from the fact that approximately 20%, or 280,000 of the 1.4 million septic systems that were constructed during the residential building boom of the 1950's and 1960's throughout Michigan are now failing. The issue of failing septic systems has been exacerbated by the fact that many Michigan homes and their now antiquated and often dysfunctional septic systems were built prior to the construction of sewer systems that now serve most towns and villages. The significance of the problem in Michigan is also illustrated by the fact that between calendar years 2013 and 2014 an estimated 5.7 billion gallons of untreated (raw) sewage from failing septic systems flowed unabated into our inland lakes, river, streams, and groundwater aquifers.

The language of MI Senate Bill 771 recognizes that while properly functioning septic systems are an effective and affordable wastewater solution, failing septic systems pose a serious risk to public health, safety, and to Michigan's freshwater resource inundated environment. If passed by the state legislature and signed into law by Governor Whitmore, Senate Bill 771 would require the MI Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) to develop a uniform performance-based standard defined Statewide Sewage Code for both conventional and alternative septic systems within three years.

The key provisions of Senate Bill 771 as introduced are as follows:

- High-risk or older residential septic systems (20+ years and within 500 feet of any surface water or within a high-risk erosion area, critical dune, or 100-year floodplain would be evaluated first, followed by 10-year inspections and checks before any change or increase in use would be approved.
- The language of Senate Bill 771 defines a septic system “failure” and authorizes local health departments to inspect, evaluate, and enforce compliance.
- If passed into law, the legislation would require the establishment of a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of a group of highly qualified experts that will help guide MI EGLE in developing a comprehensive set of rules and performance standards.
- The establishment of a new Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Administration Fund which would provide grants to local health departments, support digitization of septic records, fund public education campaigns, and assist low-income homeowners with inspection and/or repair costs.
- The language of Senate Bill 771 also authorizes the use of approved alternative and innovative treatment methods to meet state standards and therefore ensuring a high degree of flexibility for communities and property owners.

To download a copy of MI Senate Bill 771, [click here](#)



**PASSING MUCH NEEDED WAKE BOAT AND SEPTIC CODE RELATED
LEGISLATION WILL REQUIRE YOU TO WEIGH IN WITH YOUR STATE
LEGISLATORS**

The passage of Senate Bill 771 which would establish Michigan's first-ever comprehensive framework for the oversight and on-going maintenance of septic systems (on-site wastewater treatment systems); and Senate Bill 812 which would prohibit the operation of vessels operating in "wake sport mode" in waters of this state where the water depth is less than 20 feet and to a distance of not less than 500 feet from the shoreline or a dock, a raft, a buoyed or occupied bathing area, or a vessel moored or at anchor are well written, reasonable pieces

of legislation that, if enacted, will make important contributions to helping preserve and protect Michigan's wealth of inland lakes, rivers, and streams.

It is important to note, however, that Senate Bill 812 and Senate Bill 771 represent only the most recent attempts to enact common sense state law - past attempts to rein in out-of-control wake boat operators and at least begin to repair the 330,000 failing residential septic systems that pour billions of gallons of raw, e-coli inundated sewage into our lakes, rivers, and stream each year have failed in the past due to the well-funded efforts of professional lobbyists that seem to lurk around in every corner of our state capitol. We also know that the well-funded efforts of state lobbyists in preventing the passage of legislation that does not meet the needs of their profit driven employers is made much easier due to the fact that only a tiny fraction of Michigan voters ever attempts to communicate with their respective state senators or representatives.

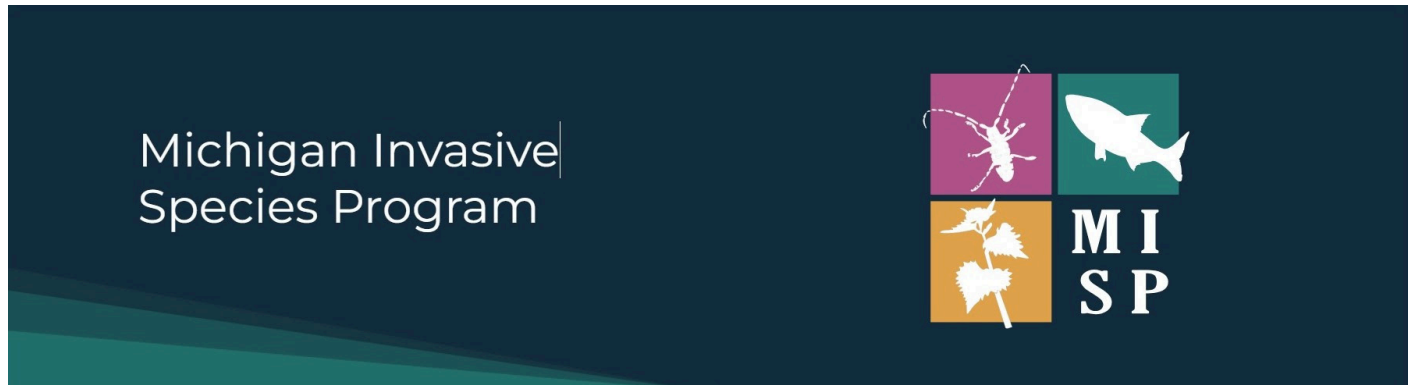
The readers of the this newsletter need to know that the latest straight forward, scientific evidence-based attempts to rein in out of control wake boat operators (Senate Bill 812); and establish a first ever statewide septic code (Senate Bill 771) will again each meet with failure in the next few months if those of us concerned about preserving the quality of our incredibly valuable inland lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater do not devote the relatively small amount of time and effort that is necessary to write, call, message, or e-mail their state senators and representatives in the very near future.

To identify your MI State Senator and their contact information

[click here](#)

To identify your MI Representatives and their contact information

[click here](#)



News Release

March 5, 2026

Contact: [Joanne Foreman](#), 517-284-5814, or [Kevin Walters](#), 616-250-8637

Invasive plants, rock snot and the emerald ash borer: NotMISpecies webinars are putting knowledge to work

While it's true that you can learn something new every day, the real value of knowledge is in putting it to good use. The upcoming NotMISpecies webinars all share the common thread of using knowledge, either from the past or from recent experiences, to better understand the present and plan for the future.

Whether it's helping to navigate changing landscapes or protecting resources from harmful plants, animals and diseases, Michigan's Invasive Species Program supports a broad array of efforts across the state.

The NotMISpecies webinar series is designed to keep you informed about the MISP's work, including current research and innovations in preventing, detecting and managing invasive

species in Michigan and the Great Lakes region. Q&A sessions and links to resources help attendees get the most out of each presentation.

Register now for upcoming sessions. Who knows, you might even learn something new!

Discovering trends through historical data

Not too long ago, collecting field data involved marking paper maps and jotting notes on a clipboard, but technology has rapidly transformed the collection, visualization and analysis of invasive species data.

In “[Old Data, New Insights: Tracking Invasive Plant Trends in Michigan’s State Parks](#)” (9 a.m. Wednesday, March 25), Mike Hindy, Greg Norwood and Emily Leslie will share how the Department of Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Division is translating legacy point data collections – historical yet potentially valuable information often stored within outdated or even obsolete systems – to uncover trends in invasive species management across Michigan’s state parks. Are the infestations increasing, decreasing or remaining unchanged? Find out when you join the hosts to learn about the challenges, considerations and future directions of GIS in invasive species management.

Unlocking the mystery of didymo

What’s happening with didymo in Michigan waters? Following detections in four Lower Peninsula coldwater rivers from 2021 to 2024, has didymo fallen off the radar?

Not for Lake Superior State University’s Ashley Moerke and Trout Unlimited’s Bryan Burroughs. In “[Rock Snot on the Radar: Tracking Didymo in Michigan Rivers](#)” (9 a.m. Wednesday, April 15), the pair will provide an update on didymo status and trends based on survey data from across the state and discuss the relationship between water chemistry and didymo blooms. Learn about Trout Unlimited’s community science program and how you can get involved in expanding didymo monitoring efforts.

Choosing an ounce of prevention

Ever wonder why certain plants or pests trigger the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to issue quarantines? Join Amber Neils, MDARD quarantine compliance and export specialist, for “[Quarantines Demystified: Keeping Michigan Green and Pest-Free](#)” (9 a.m. Thursday, May 14). Neils will share an inside look at how plant and pest quarantines are created, why they matter and when they change. This includes information on new and rescinded quarantines and what these rules mean for gardeners, growers and anyone who loves Michigan’s natural resources. Bring your questions and learn more about how quarantines help protect our state’s agriculture and environment!

Learning from the ash tree

In the early 2000's, the emerald ash borer decimated the ash population across the state. For the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians in southwest Michigan, this meant the loss of mature black ash trees, culturally important for traditional basket making. Since then, many new invasive species have emerged that could cause harm to culturally significant trees in the tribe's service area in southwest Michigan and northern Indiana.

Join Vic Bogosian for “[Kowabdanawa odë kè: Preventing and Preparing for Invasive Species on Pokagon Lands](#)” (9 a.m. Wednesday, June 17). As natural resources manager for the Pokagon Band's Kowabdanawa odë kè (“They watch over this land”), Bogosian will share how they are taking a proactive approach, including education, tree surveys and response planning, to prepare for beech leaf and beech bark diseases, Asian longhorned beetle and spotted lanternfly.

If you are interested in learning more about the MISP's work, recorded versions of all previous webinars are available on the [NotMISpecies webpage](#).

Michigan's Invasive Species Program, a collaborative effort of the departments of Natural Resources; Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy; and Agriculture and Rural Development, coordinates and supports invasive species initiatives across the state and provides support through the [Michigan Invasive Species Grant Program](#).





To download a copy of the MWA
2026 Winter Newsletter,
[click here](#)



January 27, 2026

The Department of Natural Resources is committed to providing Michigan residents the opportunity to share input and ideas on policy decisions, programs and other aspects of natural resource management and outdoor recreation opportunities.

One important avenue for this input is at meetings of the public bodies that advise the DNR and, in some cases, also set policies for natural and cultural resource management.

Frequently check the [DNR boards, commissions, committees and councils webpage](#) for updates.

The links below will take you to the webpage for each group, where you will find meeting details such as location and agenda (when finalized).

NOTE: Please check these pages often, as meeting details may change and sometimes meetings are canceled.



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 will explore 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.

Upcoming webinars

March 25

[Old Data, New Insights: Tracking Invasive Plant Trends in Michigan's State Parks](#)



Michigan's Invasive Species Watch List

Invasive species on the watch list have been identified as posing an immediate or potential threat to Michigan's economy, environment or human health. These species either have never been confirmed in the wild in Michigan or have a limited known distribution.

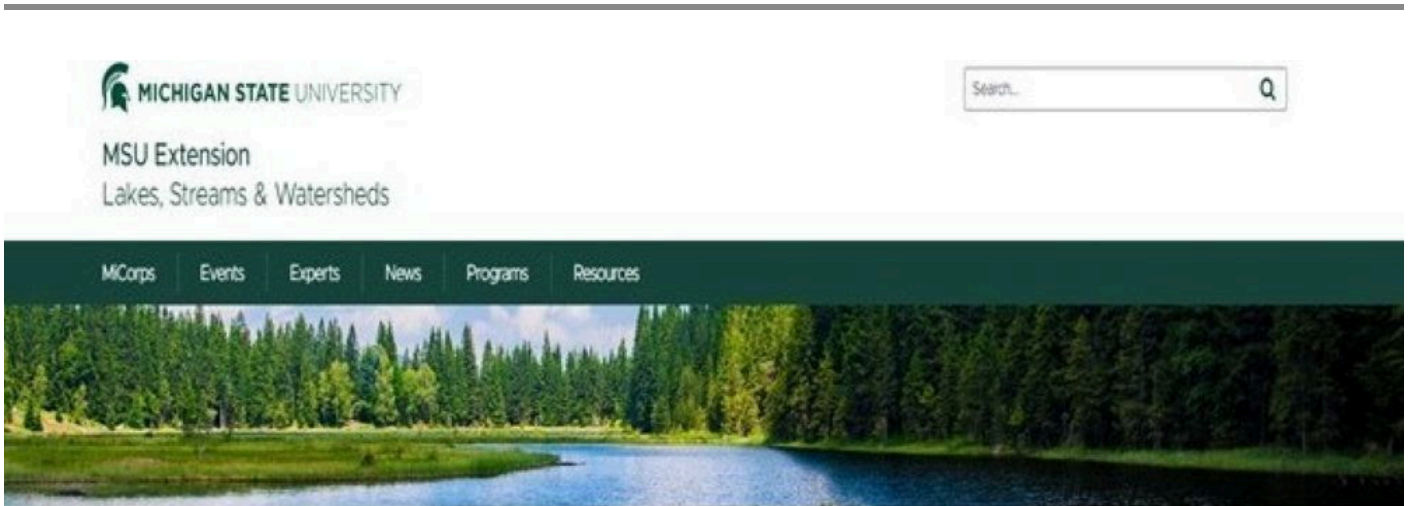
If you think you have found any of these species in Michigan, please report the occurrence via the methods given below by clicking on an individual species name.

View the watch list as a printable PDF - [InvasiveSpecies-WatchList](#)

Invasive Species Watch List Viewer

Use this mapping tool to find out where watch list invasive species have been confirmed in Michigan and where they have been successfully eradicated.

[Invasive Species Watch List Viewer](#)



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.



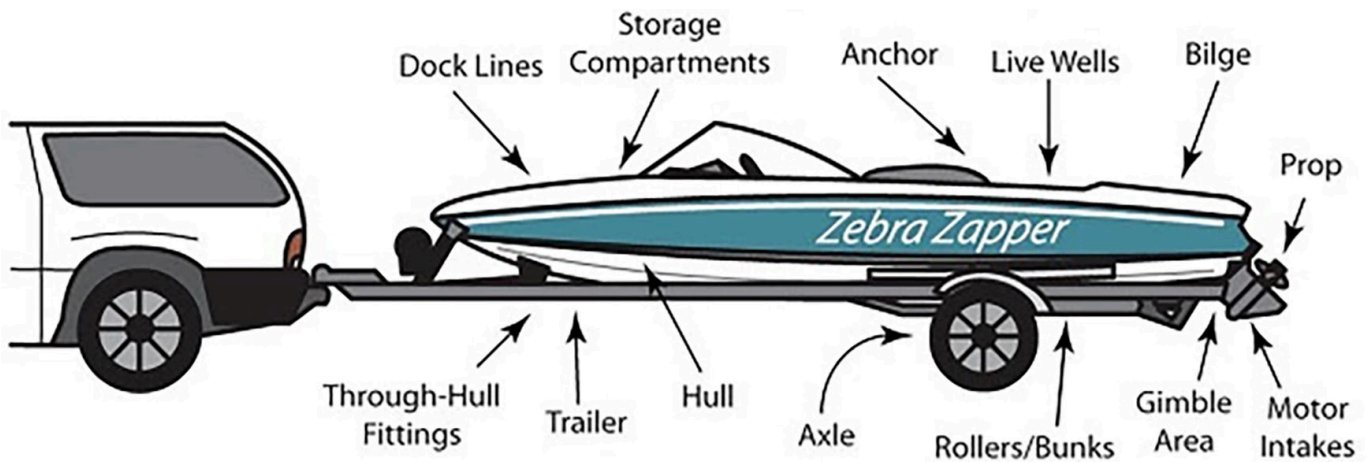
**What We Would Like Readers of this Newsletter
to Know about Michigan Waterfront Alliance**

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.

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.

April 8, Noon: [Septic system ordinances in Northern Michigan](#). Presented by Abbie Hawley, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council. Host: Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council.

April 15-17: 2026 [Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Convention](#). (*In-person conference with virtual attendance option*). Host: Wisconsin Lakes and Rivers Partnership. \$

You may also wish to explore these websites for additional events, recordings of past events, and more:

[Michigan Inland Lakes Convention presentation recordings](#)

[Michigan Lakes and Streams Association](#)

[Michigan State University Extension Center for Lakes and Streams](#)

[Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership](#)



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

[Click here](#)



MICHIGAN WATERFRONT ALLIANCE

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](#)**



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
