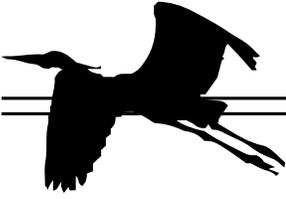


The Lower Herring Lake Association

Spring Newsletter April 2021



President's Letter

Welcome to your LHLA Spring Newsletter. We are excited to share all the fun things your LHLA Board is doing on your behalf. Contained in this Spring 2021 Newsletter is an update of the ongoing effort by Mark Coleman to transfer our Members to our online Membership Renewal and emailing system. There is also a reminder of all the wonderful benefits that are associated with being a LHLA Member.

Inside you will also find updates on both Lower Herring Lake and Lake Michigan levels, as well as an update on the current status of our Outlet Opening Permits. The lower Lake Michigan/Lower Herring Lake levels has allowed our Lower Herring Lake to return to a wake lake. We are providing strong recommendations for this season regarding the safe practice of any large wake activity.

Alison continues her work on our Shoreline and will update us on the work done by Zero Gravity aerial survey to document our shoreline. Related to our stewardship to maintain a healthy lake environment we will update you on the status and plans to continue our Aquatic Invasives mitigation with Professional Lake Management. Staying with the lake stewardship theme, we are reminding our Members to make sure our toilets/septic systems are in good working conditions.

Fiscally we are in good shape as our Treasurer Report will support. We do not see a need to increase dues at this time. We

are now a 501C-3 Corporation which allows Members to make tax deductible donations. We feel this provides LHLA with a new source of revenue as we go forward.

We have an update from two Board Members, Bill Mendenhall and Marilyn Raymond, regarding the current status of their work on their riparian properties to mitigate the past season of abnormally high Lower Herring Lake levels.

Speaking of going forward, we have three LHLA Board Members whose terms are expiring this year. Skip, Todd and Alison have all expressed an interest in renewing their commitment to the LHLA. If any Member is interested in being on a ballot, please let me know directly at mark.smithppi@gmail.com or call 715-218-8211.

On a final note, we are delighted to inform our Members that the combination of significantly lower Lake Michigan level and mild spring has resulted in our Outlet opening itself multiple times! We are delighted and amazed at the change in our lake level as well as the increased beach on Lake Michigan.

As always, your LHLA Board thanks you for your support and confidence. Feel free to contact any of us.

- Mark Smith



Marinette south of Watervale slowly being buried again. 3 masted schooner marinette. Built in 1873 in Saugatuck, wrecked November, 1886.



Maple syrup in the spring.

No Repeat of the Emergency “No Wake Ordinance” for 2021

Last summer, facing rising water levels on Lake Michigan and Lower Herring Lake, and the reality of shoreline damage from high water, wind and waves, Blaine Township moved to seek a temporary emergency 5 MPH watercraft speed limit (for six months) from the state to prevent further shoreline damage from boat wakes. The township request was approved and the ordinance was posted at boat ramps. Enforcement was supported by the Benzie County Sheriff Department.

Where We Are Now.

This winter water levels on Lake Michigan have been in decline due to a lower Canadian snow pack and less ice allowing more surface evaporation. Our outlet has been open for longer periods because of more favorable weather and natural outlet openings.

Water Levels Forecast.

The Army Corps forecasts lower water levels this year and the township and the lake association believe that we can proceed without another temporary emergency speed limit for this year.

Practical Boating Guidelines for 2021.

The Lower Herring Lake Association Board believes that we should follow some practical guidelines for wake boats and ski boats this year . . . and review state boating law. These guidelines include:

1. Wake Boating - When using a wake boat with ballast tanks and shaping a trailing high wake for wake surfing, boarding, skiing or tubing take your boat out and do it in at least 20 feet of water and 1,000 feet from shore. We say this because . . .

Simply put “Big Wake = Big Distance” from shore.

2. Ski Boating - . . . When skiing and tubing behind ski boats do it at least 1,000 feet from shore.

Again, simply put “Big Wake = Big Distance” from shore.

State Boating Law Review:

3. Distance Between Persons Being Towed and Other Objects - “Vessels and persons being towed on water skis, water sleds, etc. shall maintain a distance of 100 feet from any dock, raft, buoyed or occupied bathing areas, or vessels moored or at anchor . . . except when the vessel is proceeding at a slow-

no wake speed or when water skiers are being picked-up or dropped off.”

This is state law.

4. All Boating - All boating needs to be at least 100 feet from docks and swim platforms.

This is state law.

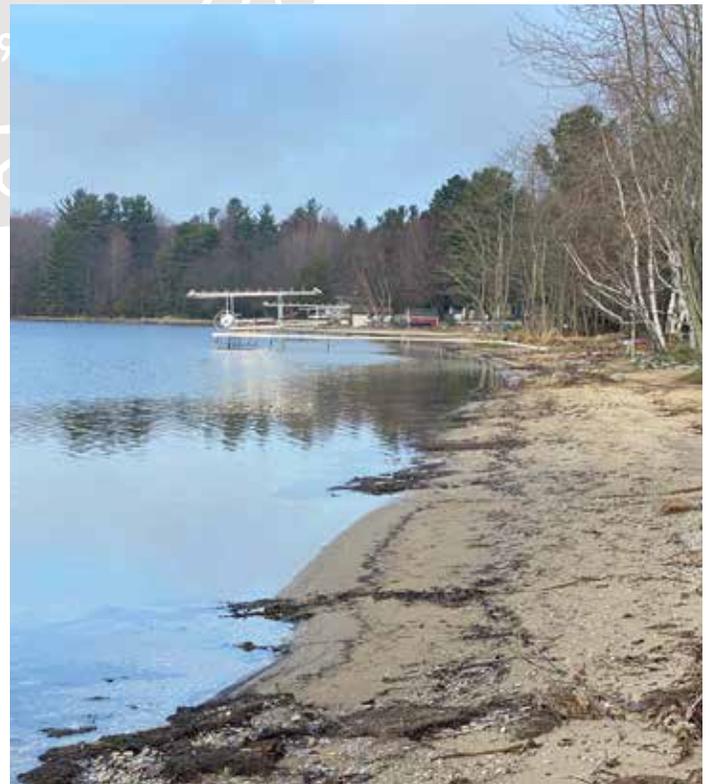
Next Steps.

The board is working to develop maps of where areas 1 and 2 are, provide them to members at the Annual Meeting, post them on signs at boat launches, and put them in email communications to our lake users.

Goal.

The goal is **safety** and **protection of our valuable lake resource.**

Please plan to support “Big Wake = Big Distance” from shore . . . and Safe Distance from other Vessels and Docks and Swim Platforms this year.



Lower Herring Lake Spring Beach.

Check Your Sump Pumps. Make Sure They are Running and Working

Last fall AJs Excavators built a new stone seawall across 110 feet of our waterfront and raised our two yards 1 - 2 1/2 feet behind the wall to protect our property from high water, wind, and waves. It worked. We were safe through the fall, winter, and spring.

Last summer we were also battling high ground water and ran our second, then year old, sump pump first on and off, then mostly on in the late summer and into late fall.

We have a local person who checks our property each month, and more often in periods of bad weather. In the late fall he checked our crawl space to discover very high water and a gurgling and straining sump. He sent photo images, described the sounds in a phone call. I called Frankfort Plumbing. They came out, declared our now two year old pump dead, and replaced it with a new one. Our property person checked later that week and told me we were back in business. We kept the power to the pump on

and ran it all winter with success. We will continue this as long as we need to.

I learned my lesson. When the original sump pump went in, back in the "80s, it ran pretty often for one summer, then it was done. When we started facing higher water again two years ago we put a new pump in and it ran occasionally but not too often. Last summer was the breaking point and it seems that two years of heavy use is the end of a pump shelf life for us. We are moving into the middle of the first year of our newest pump and I am now more aware of the how hard our pumps work.

Check your pumps or have your plumbing folks check them. They are protecting your property when you aren't looking or around.

- Bill Mendenhall

Oh Poop! Don't Ignore Your Septic System!

As water quality is important to us all and a significant contaminant in many inland lakes is from human waste, we need to diligently monitor our septic systems.

Septic system warning signs include:

1. Water or sewage is backing up inside your home (sinks, toilets, tubs), or your drains seem to be slowing.
2. Spongy green grass around your septic tank/field.
3. Water pooling around your septic tank/field.
4. Rotten egg smell around your tank/field.
5. Gurgling noise and/or fluid discharge around your septic tank's access ports.

Septic tanks should be pumped by a professional anywhere from every year to every three years dependent upon usage. If you have a garbage disposal, be judicious with the frequency of use and what you attempt to run through it. Unlike a city sewer system, whatever you run through it will need to decompose inside your septic tank or drain field.

Encourage your family and guests to ONLY flush human waste and toilet paper. Most sanitary products do not decompose quickly and most sanitary wipes (while they say they are flushable) are not. Also, never flush or dispose of cooking grease or oil down your drains.

If you have multiple loads of laundry to do, try to spread out the loads over the course of the week and use the appropriate load size setting to minimize the amount of water discharged into your system.

Also, do not allow parking on your field/tank to prevent damage and also do not plant trees close enough to your field whereby the roots could become an issue in future years.

Lastly, if you haven't had your system checked recently, it is a good idea to have a regularly scheduled septic inspection by a professional. Benzie County is one of the few Michigan Counties that requires a septic inspection before title to property can be conveyed, but obviously many of the properties on the lake have been in the same family's hands for years, if not decades.

Update on Crawl Space Flooding by the Elberta Resort Road Boat Launch



In the Fall Newsletter, I described our battles with water in our crawlspace resulting in major trenching, a steel door, waterproof insulation, additional pump, dehumidifier and monitoring system. What follows is the story of how we survived the end of Fall 2020 to the end of April 2021.

When we closed our cottage for winter in mid-October, our crawl space was dry despite periodic outlet closures resulting in higher Lower Herring Lake water levels. Note our location makes our pumps push out lake water, ground water and creek water. To monitor crawlspace status, we relied on a PumpSpy app accessed through

my cell phone. It provided alerts for water seeping in, pumps malfunctioning or electricity shut-offs. Also, the daily amount of water being pumped out was logged. We installed security cameras viewed remotely on our laptops to see our front and side yards. (A bonus included an occasional sighting of our neighbors out walking.)

Our situation remained stable until mid-winter. The outlet became plugged for a long period of time due to inclement weather and dangerously high, Lake Michigan waves. This made opening it up impossible. Alarm notices from PumpSpy started arriving constantly. Floodman employees came out to find an overwhelmed pump system with a burnt-out pump and water on the floor. The broken pump was replaced and a third installed. We entered into a maintenance program so that our system could be routinely kept up-to-date.

Since then, we have been O.K. We started watching some of our front yard appear that had been previously submerged. Pump outputs started to decrease at times, but not stay down. You can see from the two pictures below we have gained significant beachfront. However, as I write this article today, the outlet is closed and our lake water has risen. Despite this, we now have a decent sized front yard again. With predicted good news Lake Michigan water levels should continue to drop, we remain vigilant preparing for the worst and hoping for the best.

- Marilyn Raymond

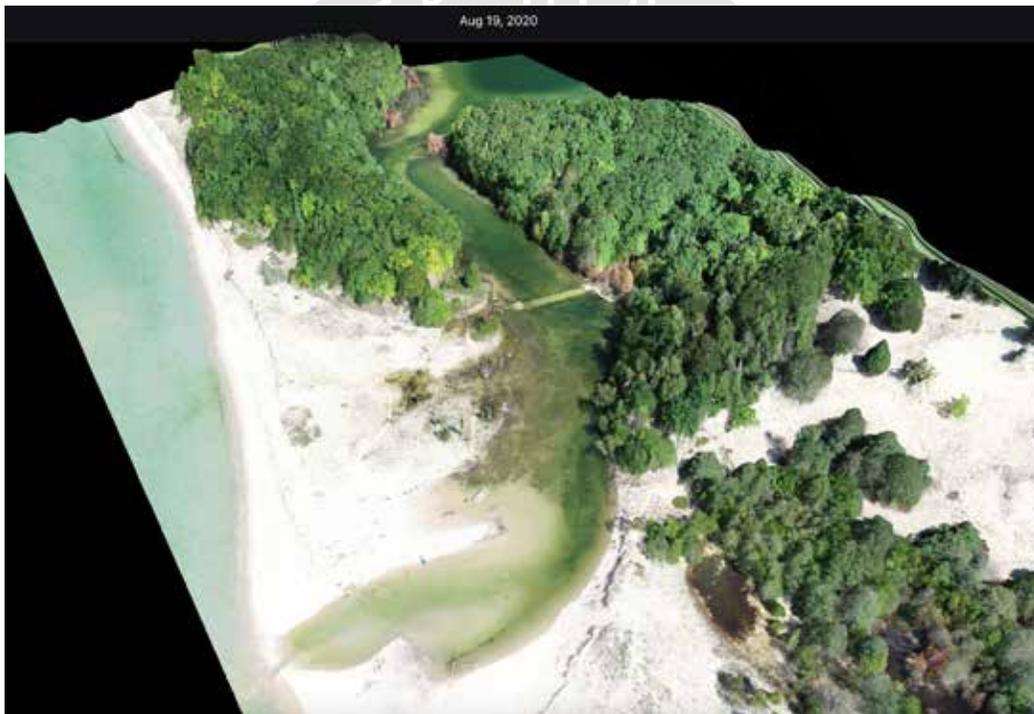


Shoreline Survey of Lower Herring Lake - Aerial Drone Imagery

The LHLA Board commissioned a shoreline survey of our lake from Dennis Wiand, of Zero Gravity Aerial (<http://zerogravityaerial.com/>) out of Traverse City. The purpose was to establish a set of high-quality aerial images, to give us information on the lake shoreline that can help with issues such as aquatic weed patches, erosion problems, changes in the shoreline, etc. Dennis carried out the survey from his boat during the week of August 15-20, using an aerial drone. The survey included Lower Herring Lake, the shoreline portion of Herring Creek, and quite a bit of the Outlet. Dennis compiled the digital data from the survey. He created 3-D models of the Outlet, the DNR Public Launch, and Herring Creek. The 3-D image of the Outlet is shown here as a sample.

He returned to our lake in September to help take a closer look at some specific aquatic plants with Mark Smith and Tom Morton, using an underwater drone vehicle. We look forward to hearing a presentation by Mr. Wiand at the Annual Meeting, and to using the data to help locate aquatic plants, see where shoreline erosion or other problems are happening, and monitor changes in the shoreline vegetation. The survey will serve as a baseline of historical data to measure change and trends into the future. Dennis is working with several lake associations, and more ways to use the data will be emerging for all the lakes to benefit from.

- Alison Berry



3D model of Lower Herring Lake Outlet, assembled by Dennis Wiand.

Aquatic Invasives

LHLA has engaged Professional Lake Management to assist us in controlling Aquatic Invasives. Our main focus will be in controlling exotic and/or invasive aquatic plants. Eurasian watermilfoil and Starry Stonewort have been positively identified in Lower Herring Lake. Other exotic species are present in Michigan and its important to ensure that we have our management program in place and prepared for any new introductions. Exotic and invasive species will again be our focus. PLM will once again survey our lake this spring to

validate the treatment last fall. Based on this current survey we will target the prime treatment areas. This proactive aggressive approach has resulted in minimizing our mitigation costs. In 2020, 1.7 acres of EWM was treated whereas in 2019, 9.1 acres; in 2018, 8.5 acres; in 2017, 7 acres. The decrease in infestation is due to selectively targeting the root system to prevent these nonnative plants from spreading. It is very important to continue to survey, monitor and treat nonnative plants in Lower Herring Lake.

Lake Levels

The big lake was down 10 inches in February from where it was in February of 2020 toward the beginning of a record setting streak that ran from January 20 through August of 20. By this July, the Army Corps predicts that the big lake will be down 12 inches below July of 20, but with a possible range of anywhere from only 4 to up to 20 inches below last year, the good news is that all the predictions are for it to be below last year's record high level. At that time the lake

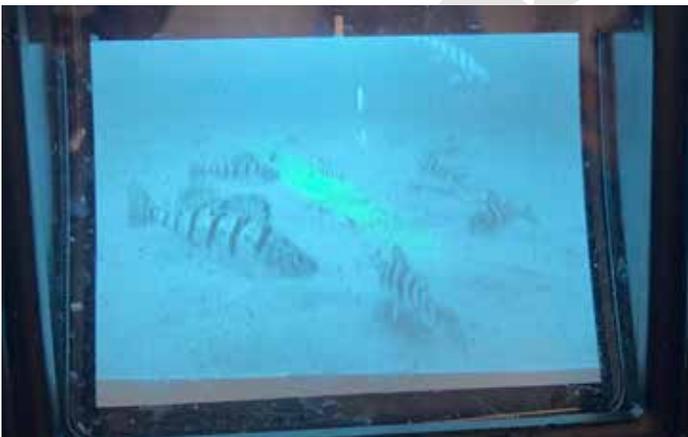
should start its normal fall/winter decline, giving us some breathing room going into next winter. We are not out of the woods (or should I say water) yet, it is going to take a few more years of low precipitation/high evaporation/high outflow through the great lakes system to get back to normal, so do not let your guard down.

- Skip Noble

OUR REVISED JOINT EGLE/VSACE PERMIT REVISION IS IN THE REVIEW PHASE. WE EXPECT APPROVAL BY MIDSUMMER.

- Mark Smith

Ice Season on Lower Herring Lake



Hali jigs tipped with wax worms and minnows took a number of fish. Tungsten jigs tipped with minnow heads and wigglers also produced. Natural colors seemed to be best and the perch population proved to be strong.

The perch bite seemed to die off once dark set in and the walleye bite seemed to pickup around dusk. Set lines with split shot and a single hooks tipped with a live minnow took a handful of walleye along the break lines. Most of what was caught seemed to be smaller males in the 8-15" range.

The walleye bite continued through the night as an overnight session produced on rattle reels and tipups with bells. A welcomed interruption to some occasional shut eye.

Ice conditions seemed to quickly deteriorate as a warm snap came through. Shore ice typically compromises first making it difficult to access the lake with machines. Always remember that "no ice is safe ice" and enjoy the hard water season with caution.

Spud your way out early in the season, wear ice picks around your neck and float suits are available to keep you above water in the event that an accident does occur and you go through.

Until next ice season, tight lines.

- Matthew Swain



The 2020-2021 Lower Herring Lake ice season got off to a slow start - as we didn't see safe ice until early February when we experienced a prolonged cold snap. Maximum ice thickness experienced during the season was 8-10" and a handful of machines were seen buzzing around the lake.

After the ice accumulated to 4+ inches, a number of perch were found on the north end of the lake in 30-50 FOW.

Membership Update

This year the LHLA has started the membership renewal process already. Thank you to all of the 36 people who have renewed from our total membership of 83. There are 63 Riparian, 6 Associate Voting and 14 Associate - Non Voting types represented. Anyone can contribute at the Associate Non-Voting level of \$50 per year and the Riparians and Associate Voting level is \$150 per year.

I will be sending out a renewal reminder to all current members who have not yet renewed soon. Our goal is to expedite that process before the annual meeting in July.

If you are already a member and have not renewed, you may do so at the following link:

www.joinit.org/o/lower-herring-lake-association/members

Or you may mail in a check to this address.

LHLA
PO Box 11
Frankfort, MI 49635

Any questions about membership can be directed to:

lowerherringla@gmail.com

- Mark Coleman

LHLA Benefits

The Lower Herring Lake Association was founded in 1963 by riparian property owners working to maintain and protect our lake's natural beauty, keep it healthy, sustain its water quality, and ensure it's ongoing recreational opportunities. After 2000, membership was opened to to enable eligible non-riparian owners in the area adjacent to LHL to participate in the organization and be active in its efforts. Today we plan and operate as a part of the larger Herring Valley Watershed Coalition connected to the other watersheds in the surrounding area.

The LHLA is a 501C3 non-profit organization that raises funds through membership fees, contributions from individuals, businesses, other non-profit groups, governmental bodies, and qualifies for both private and public grants and other qualified gifts to do its work.

LHLA Members benefit from:

1. Having a primary organization that deals with our issues and works with a coalition of various other organizations on larger watershed issues;
2. Coordination of any outlet opening activities with State and Federal government agencies;

3. Monitoring and keeping the dam sound and functional;
4. Monitoring and maintaining water quality;
5. Monitoring and controlling shoreline invasive plant species and underwater weeds;
6. Learning information about stewardship strategies that can be used for shoreline protection and lake health;
7. Our working with local and state governments to maintain fish populations for area fishermen;
8. Our working with local and state governments to ensure watercraft access and law enforcement;
9. Having a go-to organization to hear issues and act as a sounding board related to Lower Herring Lake and the watershed area;
10. Ensuring that matters related to and that impact Lower Herring Lake and the watershed area are handled professionally and legally for LHLA members.

**LHLA ANNUAL MEETING JULY 3 AT THE WHITE OWL.
DETAILS WILL BE SENT AS CONDITIONS ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING.**

Lower Herring Lake Association



P.O. Box 11
Frankfort, MI 49635

Board of Directors & Terms

2018 - 2021

Allison Berry	530-902-7294
Todd Frank	847-722-8253
Vernon Noble	231-352-7035

2019 - 2022

Bill Mendenhall	616-450-4252
Sarah Delavan	716-262-5488
Mark Coleman	616-856-0341

2021 - 2023

Mark Smith	715-218-8211
Marilyn Raymond	248-763-5343
Mike Pringle	231-590-7969



www.LowerHerringLakeAssociation.org

