



School Section Lake POA Crier

Through education and commitment we dedicate ourselves to maintain, protect and preserve for future generations, our beautiful lake.

From the President

By Laurie Kanouse

I've enjoyed working with our volunteer board of representatives and with our partners and neighbors throughout the region over the past year. Thank you to everyone who has pitched in!

Many people work hard on behalf of our lake and our greater community. You'll meet some of them at our Annual Property Owners meeting June 8, where we'll share updates from local leaders whose roles most closely affect our lake. We'll discuss topics of interest to our property owners, and we'll vote in a new slate of board members and board leadership.

Our board strives to focus on the essential tasks of our association's mission and vision: preserving and protecting our beautiful lake for generations. An issue that's come up recently is the potential damage of wake boats to small lakes like ours. We've included an article in this newsletter that we hope sheds light on

the topic and we're looking forward to discussing it with everyone in person in June.

We also continue to oversee the management of water quality and weed control. We repopulate the lake with Walleye, and we manage and maintain our shared boat launch. Beyond these core duties, we try to create community among our members through annual events and activities that let us share our love of School Section Lake. Whenever possible, we've passed along vital information from neighboring organizations whose work affects our property owners.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our property owners meeting, June 8 at Morton Township hall – 9 a.m.! Please consider volunteering in some capacity. We need board members and all of our annual events benefit from more helping hands. Together we can continue to build a thriving School Section Lake community for generations to come.

SSLPOA Executive Board:

Laurie Kanouse, President
lauriekanouse1022@gmail.com

Gretchen Johnson, Vice President
kzoogretchen@gmail.com

Jerry Ambrose, Treasurer
gambrose49@gmail.com

Marlene Schalm, Secretary
mschalm1@gmail.com

For a full list of our representatives, visit our website. Note that our slate of executive officers and board members may change June 8.

Boat Launch

Upgraded in 2010, this private boat ramp is owned by members of Oak Park 1 and Pangborn Park subdivisions who share it with lake property owners. (The dock was graciously provided by Lakeside Motor Sports and the gate by Margot Miller.) The gate code is changed annually and provided by email to members each spring. Please be responsible with the code and don't share it! If you get to the gate and have forgotten the code call Don Swanson at the phone number on the gate.

Area Highlights

Looking for something fun to do this summer? Check these out: Mecosta Days (villageofmecosta.org), Morton Township Library summer programs (morton.michlibrary.org) for children and adults, Music by the River Friday evenings in Bromley Park, downtown Mecosta, Remus Heritage Days (remus.org/heritage-days). A number of local communities also offer local history museums.

Mark Your Calendar

Annual Meeting June 8 at 9 a.m. at
Morton Township Hall

Protecting the Lake, Managing the Lakeshore

If you're thinking of dredging, filling, building, replacing or adding a new structure on your lakeshore property, you'll need a permit from the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE). Their oversight helps reduce the potential negative impact of your project to the lake, the natural environment, and your neighbors' property.

Today, hard surface seawalls are discouraged. Instead, contemporary planning promotes soft-shore landscaping, also called bioengineering. This approach creates a "living" shoreline through the use of native plants, biodegradable products and other natural materials to stabilize the shoreline. Just like the old seawalls, the natural approach protects the property from waves and erosion. For more information contact the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Environmental Assistance Center (800) 662-9278, or by email at deq-assist@michigan.gov.

Dragon Trail

The latest addition to Mecosta County Parks is Dragon Trail, a non-motorized hard-surface trail designed for mountain biking, hiking and running. Construction is a joint effort between the Mecosta County Park Commission, Newaygo County Parks and Recreation Commission, and the West Michigan Biking Alliance.

So far, 34 miles of the trail's 47-mile path around Hardy Dam are complete and open to the public. More terrain will open this summer. You can learn more online at www.mecostacountyparks.com or at www.dragon.us.

Enjoy Free Fishing and Park Access June 8 and 9

If you're 17 or older, you need a fishing license to fish in Michigan – except on free fishing days, which happen twice a year. This June 8 and 9, all fishing license fees are waived. Note that fishing regulations will still apply. Find more information at michigan.gov/dnr.

These two days are also Mecosta County's Annual Community Open House event. That means that entrance fees are waived for park visitors driving into county parks during these dates. Visitors arriving by boat must display a mooring permit.

When motoring any boat along the shoreline or in shallow areas, minimize your wake. Every action causes a reaction. By slowing to 5MPH within 100 feet of the shoreline we can reduce erosion and disturbance of bottom sediment and sensitive aquatic life forms.

To keep our lake free from an noxious weeds and disease, please wash all watercraft coming from other lakes and waters prior to putting it on School Section Lake.

Free Boating Classes

Born after July 1996? You need a boaters safety certificate to operate boats with a motor over six horsepower. Folks born after 1978 must have a boaters safety certificate to operate personal watercraft (such as jet skis).

You can obtain both through a free course from the Mecosta County Sheriff's Department. Classes are open to those aged 12 and up. Find more information and register online at www.mecostacounty.org/government/sheriff

June 8, 2024 – School Section Lake Veteran's Park

July 13, 2024 – Brower Park

Wake Boats And their Potential Impact on Small Lakes

We want to preface this article with a few thoughts. And then we have a favor to ask...

Boating is vital to Michigan's economy and especially Mecosta County's. Swimming, boating, and water skiing are why many of us choose to live here. Last summer, though, our board members began getting phone calls from property owners with concerns about wake boats on School Section Lake.

Wake boats are not just boats with big motors. They were designed to create a wake or wave to enhance the skiing or boarding experience. They look like a lot of fun. But, based on research from environmental groups — including the Michigan DNR — and the boating industry itself, they're not a good fit for small lakes. Several ecological reports found that they can do significant damage to the lake bottom and shoreline, as well as the natural ecosystem that relies on the lake. They can also damage homeowner property.

Here at SSL, owners noticed an increase in the number of dead fish floating on the lake — a possible sign of

disruption to the lake. Others noted that the waves created made it difficult to see fallen skiers and were a safety concern. Still others voiced concerns about the potential impact of the large waves to the shoreline and to their property. The Michigan legislature is considering Michigan House Bill 5532, which calls for a legal ban on wake boats within 500 feet of the shoreline. This is similar to laws in neighboring states. With our lake's geography and its narrow passageways around the island, this bill should make wake boating impractical on School Section Lake. In the meantime, we're following the DNR's recommendation and asking homeowners to voluntarily refrain from operating wake boats here. (The DNR says 500 feet, but that is not feasible on much of SSL.) Veteran's Park does not have a boat launch large enough to accommodate these boats, so the only point of access for a wake boat is through our shared boat launch.

We'll keep you updated as new information becomes available. We love School Section Lake — as we know you do! We want to ensure a safe, responsible, fun experience for everyone now and for generations.

Fish Stocking

Stoney Creek Fishery of Grant, Michigan was on hand October 19 to help us plant approximately 930 Walleye, each at 6-8 inches in length. The ice fishing this winter wasn't very good, so there should be plenty of fish left for summer anglers!

Stocking the lake with Walleye serves a dual purpose. It helps us manage the fish population — Walleye help keep the number of stunted Bluegill down — and it gives anglers the chance to catch more fish. We've been stocking the lake since 2006.

This is a strictly donation-supported activity that your SSLPOA oversees, under the direction of Jerry King. It's an essential part of making School Section Lake an all-sports lake. Please consider donating to the fish fund when you pay your membership dues. And then join us in the fall for the next planting.



Meet Your Neighbor Picnic

Our annual meet-your-neighbor picnic is an opportunity for everyone around the lake to gather. Starting last year the Mecosta County Park Commission Supervisor Jeff Abel graciously donated a picnic pavilion at Veteran's Park as a place for us to meet. It gives us of plenty of room and we don't have to worry about rain.

Our picnic in the park offers a number of advantages, including a significant cost savings from the tent, tables and chairs we've had to rent in the past — not to mention the time and effort for set up and tear down. It also gives us a free inside peek at the park with a playground for kids and a large beach for swimming. There are trails to hike, an historic fieldstone concessions building and a one-room schoolhouse with local history. Once our picnic is over, you're welcome to explore the park and all it offers.

We'll have a greeter at the gate that morning with special parking passes. If you choose to access the park by boat you must have a Park Docking Permit and because of the shortage of boat slips, access is first come/first serve.

You bring the side and dessert dishes to pass!

8 Tips for Lake Preservation

1. Empty live wells and bilges at the ramp when removing your boat from a lake.
2. Don't transfer live fish to any other bodies of water.
3. Clean wells and bilges with 1 cup bleach to 5 gallons of water. Don't forget to disinfect your minnow bucket.
4. Use only non-phosphorus fertilizer on your lawn. Don't use any fertilizer within 25 feet of the shoreline.
5. Properly dispose of unused bait on land.
6. Use low phosphate cleaning supplies when cleaning your boat — or anything outside.
7. Refuel personal watercraft and small boats on land when you can.
8. Clean boats, motors, and trailers of any clinging plant or animal material before launching onto the lake.

We look forward to a great turnout this year, but our organizing team needs help! Let them know what you can do... (contact us at schoolsectionlake@gmail.com)

- ◆ Laurie Kanouse coordinates the event, ensuring that the pavilion is set-up and soft drinks are on hand.
- ◆ Allan Morrison will grill the main dish (it's always been Beef Brisket, but there's a rumor he's considering ribs!)
- ◆ Maxine Murdoch, our prize coordinator, does an amazing job collecting prizes from local merchants. This is a great way to promote buying local and it's always fun to win something!

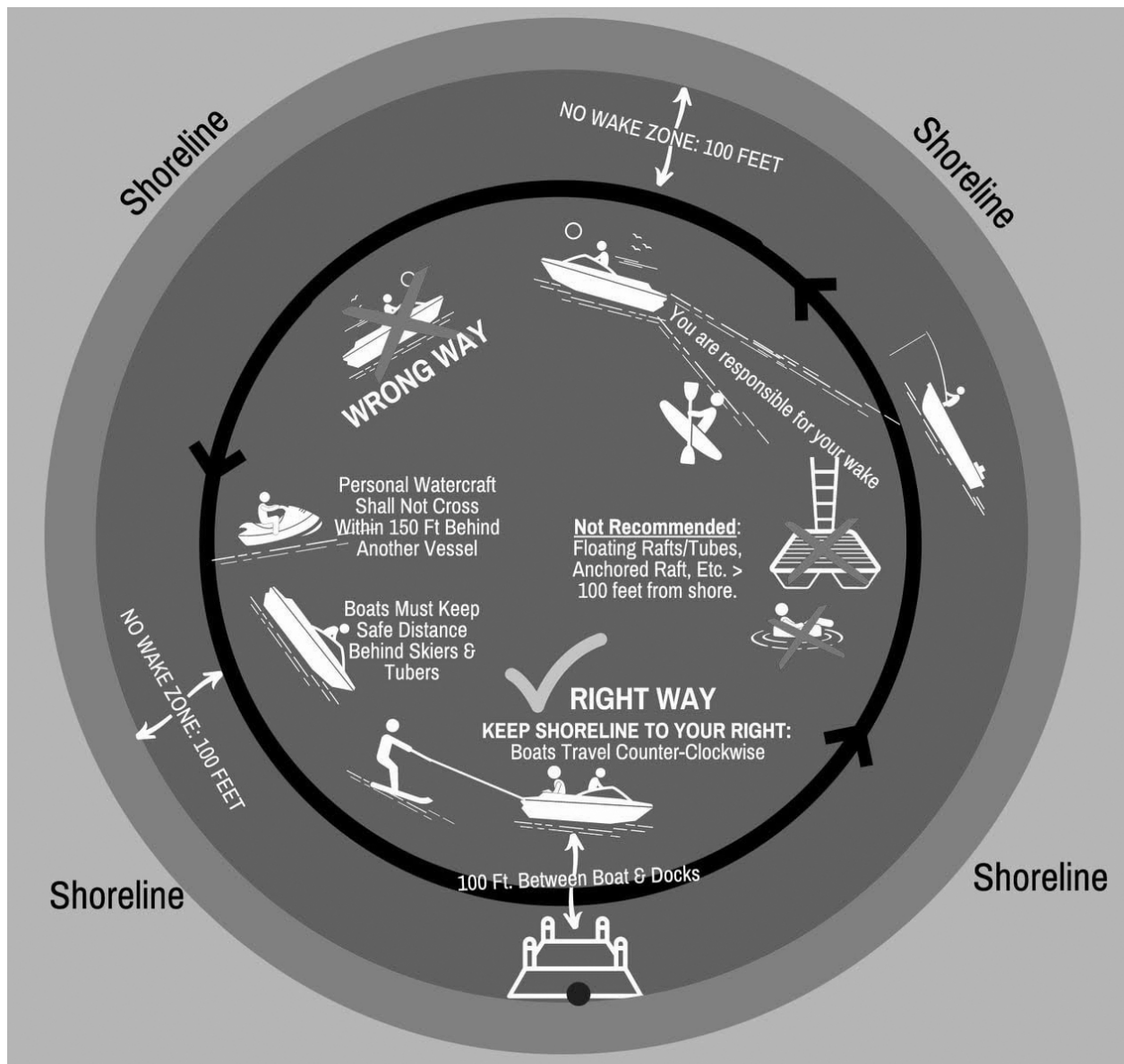
Meet Your Neighbor Picnic this year is Saturday, August 10, 2024 from 11:00-1:00 PM. (Always the 2nd Saturday in August) at Veteran's Park

Annual Poker Run July 27!

How do you play poker at multiple locations while traveling by nonmotorized boat? Come and find out. This year marks the 8th year of this annual event that seems to attract more participants each year. The more that play, the bigger the pot! Look for more details on the School Section Lake Owners and Friends page on Facebook.

Fourth of July Parade

Join us for our annual parade of boats. Get your best float-boat on and show off your Independence Day spirit. Date to be announced!



No Wake Hours: 7:30 p.m. to 11 a.m.

The channels are always no wake

- ◆ Clip and post where all your boat operators — and swimmers — can see!
- ◆ Safety magnets with this image are available from SSLPOA! Contact us at www.schoolsection.com.
- ◆ To keep our lake free from noxious weeds and disease, please wash all watercraft coming from other lakes and waters prior to putting them on School Section Lake.

Image courtesy of Mecosta County Parks

Our Neighbors Around the Lake

School Section Lake Veteran's Park

School Section Lake Veteran's Park continues to partner with SSLPOA on fish stocking and weed control. The Park will again serve as site-host for our Meet-Your-Neighbor Picnic in August.

Over the past year, the Park has seen changes and improvements as part of Mecosta County Parks 2021-2025 Master Plan, which seeks to upgrade all of its facilities and operations to better meet changing customer needs. At Veteran's Park that includes adding up to 41 additional campsites. All but five or six of these will remain in the current camping area footprint with the additional sites earmarked for staff and located adjacent to the Park Manager's trailer. The Park added a new septic system in the fall and has plans to make its playground ADA compliant.

Questions or concerns about the Park? Contact the Park Manager at 231-972-7450.

RV Park Proposal Group

An independent citizens group has formed for the purpose of educating and engaging the public in land use and development issues that may impact our community. Called the Morton Township Residents for Responsible Development — MTRFRD — the group's initial focus is its opposition to a proposed campground and RV park located on 105th Ave and Lake Drive/St Ives Drive, across from the Lake Mecosta public boat launch. MTRRD's volunteer Board members represent Canadian Lakes, Tri-Lakes, School Section Lake, and the Community in general. You can learn more at mtrfrd.org. We'll continue to pass along MTRFRD information as we get it.

SSLPOA has heard from property owners both in favor of and opposed to the development. We encourage everyone to become informed about this issue and to share any concerns you may have with Morton Township. We have asked that Township planners consider how the park's planned development may affect our lake access roads and to pay particular attention to the potential safety risks of everyone.

Private Roads Management

Sections of both East and West School Section Lake roads were privately funded and are now privately maintained. Because the need for these roads was specific to just some of the property owners, and the desire to have them paved occurred at different times, two independent organizations emerged to oversee these projects. They remain independently managed. If you're not sure if your road is private, check your winter tax bill to see if you're being charged a private road assessment. For updates and information about your road, contact the appropriate overseeing entity directly. You may also contact Morton Township, which levies the assessment on your tax bills.

West School Section Lake Road Association
Scott Davis, President
(231) 598-2393
Alisha Garland, Treasurer
(231) 972-4174

East School Section Lake private road
Gene Sperry, President
gjsperry@charter.com



Become A Part of SSLPOA!

For many years the SSLPOA has been an important part of efforts to promote the health, welfare, and safety of our lake community. Your SSLPOA oversees weed control activities, tests water quality, monitors the lake's water level, and oversees the boat launch. It has also actively worked to assure that the lake remains a premier fishing area by monitoring the amount and quality of the fish in the lake and by annually planting fish in the lake. It also promotes community building with events such as the Meet-Your-Neighbor-Picnic, the lighted boat parades, and the poker run.

The SSLPOA is directed by a 17 member Board of Directors, who are elected by the membership for three year terms. Each year one third of the Board positions are filled by election at the Annual meeting, which is held each June. The goal is to have representation from all the subdivisions around the lake. We invite you to participate!

Membership in SSLPOA is open to any property owner with deeded access to SSL who is interested in promoting a safe and enjoyable experience at or in School Section Lake. Dues are \$20 per year and will be collected beginning June 1 for the upcoming year (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025). Only dues paying members can be elected to the Board and are allowed to vote on items brought to the membership.

Joining is easy! Simply send a \$20 check payable to SSLPOA and include any donation you wish to make to the Fish Planting program. Please send it to SSLPOA, P.O. Box 115, Mecosta, MI 49332, and include the following information. (If you issue a check through your bank, please introduce yourself at schoolsectionlake@gmail.com. Your contact information is important!)

Welcome New Members

Gerald and Kathy Antuma

Angela and Wade Douglas

Linda and John Tuit

Karla and Karl Kopenski

Michael and Sheilly McNally

Greta and Jason McGuire

SSLPOA Financial Report

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
	<u>7/1/23-6/30/24</u>	<u>3/11/2024</u>
SSLPOA		
Beginning Balance	\$5,200	\$5,384
Dues	\$2,500	\$2,000
Expenses		
Water Testing	\$250	\$0
Newsletters	\$1,000	\$293
Events and Activities	\$2,000	\$751
Insurance & Misc	\$1,500	\$987
Total Expenses	\$4,750	\$2,031
Ending balance	\$2,950	\$5,353
FISH PLANTING		
Beginning balance	\$4,457	\$4,457
Donations	\$2,000	\$1,530
Expenses	\$2,500	\$2,266
Ending balance	\$3,957	\$3,721
WEED CONTROL		
Beginning balance	\$39,119	\$37,836
Assessments	\$8,769	\$8,552
Expenses	\$12,000	\$3,853
Ending balance	\$35,888	\$42,535

2023/2024 SSLPOA Dues and Donations Mail to: SSLPOA, PO Box 115 Mecosta Mi 49332

Name: _____

Address(es) of Lake properties: _____

Subdivision: _____

Mailing address if different from Lake address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Payment Amount: Dues: \$20 Fish Planting donation: _____ Total: \$ _____

Spring 2024 Newsletter

Visit us online at www.schoolsectionlake.com

Have questions or want to volunteer? schoolsectionlake@gmail.com

2024 Dates to Remember

- ◆ Annual Meeting: *Sat, June 10, 2024, 9:00 AM*, Twp. Hall
- ◆ Independence Day/July 4th Boat Parade *TBD*
- ◆ Poker Run: *Sat July 27, 2024*
- ◆ Meet Your Neighbor: *Sat, Aug 10, 2024, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM*
- ◆ Labor Day Lighted Boat Parade: *TBD*

Recycle in the Morton Township Business Park located on 9 Mile Road

Wednesdays (June – early Sept) & Saturdays (year 'round) from 9:00 AM - Noon

Morton Township Farmers Market 9 a.m.-noon *Wednesdays & Saturdays, June-Sept.*

School Section Lake Property Owners Association

Laurie Kanouse, President

PO Box 115

Mecosta, MI 49332



Postage Donated by
Lakeside Motor Sports