



# The GLQO Watershed Journal

The mission of the Gull Lake Quality Organization is to address concerns and provide education regarding the use of natural resources of the Gull Lake Watershed.

Volume 4, Issue 1

<http://www.glqo.net>

January-March, 2010

## Upcoming Events

### January 2010

27th—Board Meeting 6:30 PM  
Check website for location

### March 2010

10th—Board Meeting 6:30 PM  
Check website for location

### April 2010

21st—Board Meeting 6:30 PM  
Check website for location

### June 2010

2nd—Board Meeting 6:30 PM  
Check website for location

### July 2010

14th—Annual Meeting 7:00 PM  
Check website for location

## The GLQO Watershed Journal To Get Even More Colorful in 2010!

The GLQO Board of Directors is excited to announce that we are, starting with this issue of the Watershed Journal, moving to a full-color printed newsletter! We will be partnering with Howard Printing of Kalamazoo, who will be helping us bring you more information and more color four times a year.



If you have ideas as to how we can best make use of color in this newsletter, don't hesitate to contact us at [info@glqo.net](mailto:info@glqo.net) or at P.O. Box 34, Hickory Corners, MI, 49060.

## Welcome to Our Newest Board Member!



The GLQO is pleased to announce the addition of Susan Houseman to its Board of Directors. Susan is a riparian who has lived on Little Long Lake for several years, and works as a Senior Economist for the W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research in Kalamazoo. Given her long-time involvement in water quality testing issues on Little Long Lake, Susan is a natural fit for GLQO's Water Quality Committee.

Welcome Susan!

### From the Desk of the GLQO President

*A heartfelt thanks goes out to everyone for their support of the GLQO in 2009!*

*As the new year begins, we know that we will have many exciting challenges and opportunities ahead of us. Thank you in advance for your continuing support of the GLQO in 2010 as we strive to protect and preserve the natural beauty of the Gull Lake Watershed.*

*May 2010 be a great year for all!*

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## Partner Spotlight—Celebrating Success: Protecting the Water Quality of Gull Lake

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By *Emily Wilke, Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy*

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*(Editor's note: our friends over at the SWMLC (<http://www.swmlc.org>) have written an excellent article on their progress in protecting the headwaters of Prairieville Creek. This article, which appeared in their newsletter, as well as the Kalamazoo Gazette in November, is reprinted here with permission of Emily and the SWMLC.)*

The Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy (SWMLC) has been working toward protecting the land around Prairieville Creek and the water quality of Gull Lake. We are pleased to announce that SWMLC has purchased the development rights on 13 acres of land along M-43 in Barry County, creating 86 acres of contiguous protected open space along a half-mile segment of Prairieville Creek, headwaters of Gull Lake.

The 86 acres are protected through three separate conservation easements. In late 2008, Don and Jerre James conserved their 13 acres of land, and the Boudeman and Vander Molen families conserved their 60-acre parcel. SWMLC's recent purchase of the conservation easement from Jim and Alice Fish links the other two properties to create one large unbroken swath of protected land. (See map on next page.)



*The crystal clear water of Prairieville Creek meanders through a beautiful floodplain forest. This view looks upstream from just below Mud Lake.  
Photo by Peter D. Ter Louw*

Protecting land with conservation easements reduces the number of future buildings on the three properties. "By protecting these 86 acres, we are preserving the rural character of the area," said Emily Wilke, SWMLC director of land protection. "Many people drive past these adjacent properties along M-43 every day and, even when the corridor becomes more developed, these properties will remain part of a serene country landscape."

Located at the north end of Gull Lake, the two-mile-long creek is a critical source of water flowing into Gull Lake, supplying 60% of the stream flow into the lake and 21% of the lake's annual water budget. Prairieville Creek is also Gull Lake's only cold-water fish-spawning area and provides winter habitat for large numbers of waterfowl.

***"The people who own property along this creek understand how important Prairieville Creek is to wildlife and the health of Gull Lake."***

***— Jim Fish***

"Prairieville Creek is the most important stream in the Gull Lake watershed," said Joe Johnson, president of the Four Townships Water Resources Council and former director of the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary. "The creek is almost entirely groundwater fed. It remains cold in the summer and almost never freezes in the winter. But if the land uses around it change, the creek could very easily become impaired."

SWMLC's goal is to protect a 100-foot vegetative buffer on each side of Prairieville Creek. Using the forested floodplain as the buffer will prevent non-point-source pollution from entering into the creek. Reducing impervious surfaces (inherent with buildings) in the upland areas will also keep upland soils intact, which is critical to providing the necessary groundwater recharge for the creek.

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## Partner Spotlight (continued)

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The project, supported by a \$500,000 matching grant from the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), is a collaborative effort to work with landowners along the creek to protect uplands with high groundwater recharge and wetlands with seeps and springs that supply water to the creek and, eventually, to Gull Lake. These three conservation easements create a permanent protection of the land, restricting development and changes to the habitat while the land remains privately owned.

“The people who own property along this creek understand how important Prairieville Creek is to wildlife and the health of Gull Lake, and they’ve been willing to work with SWMLC to protect their land,” said Jim Fish, who placed a conservation easement on his property in September and has been a long-time advocate for the conservation of Prairieville Creek.

The conservation approach to protecting the creek was developed through a planning process supported by the Kalamazoo Community Foundation in 2006 in which SWMLC, Gull Lake Quality Organization, Four Townships Water Resources Council, Kellogg Biological Station, Kalamazoo River Watershed Council, and Prairieville Township worked together to craft a comprehensive conservation plan. Working with landowners to protect their land with a conservation easement was identified as the highest priority.

“We are extremely pleased to work with forward-thinking landowners willing to protect their land with SWMLC for a greater good,” said Peter Ter Louw, SWMLC executive director. “The proactive work of these individuals and organizations to protect this creek before it is damaged will make a difference in protecting the water quality of this region.”

The water quality of Gull Lake is greatly impacted by the land use along its edges and tributaries, and the conserved land along this major tributary will help ensure the pristine water quality of Gull Lake for generations to come. We still have one more year in the grant funded by the MDEQ to conserve land along Prairieville Creek, so our work is not over.

Stay tuned to hear about future conserved properties. If you have a vested interest in the Gull Lake area and would like to join our efforts in protecting this valuable resource, please contact the SWMLC office to find out how to become involved.



*Prairieville Creek flows south from its source in the headwater wetlands just north of Hickory Road into the north end of Gull Lake at the bottom of the map. The three conservation easement properties are shown here between Prairieville Creek and M-43.*

# Update on Water Quality Monitoring Planning

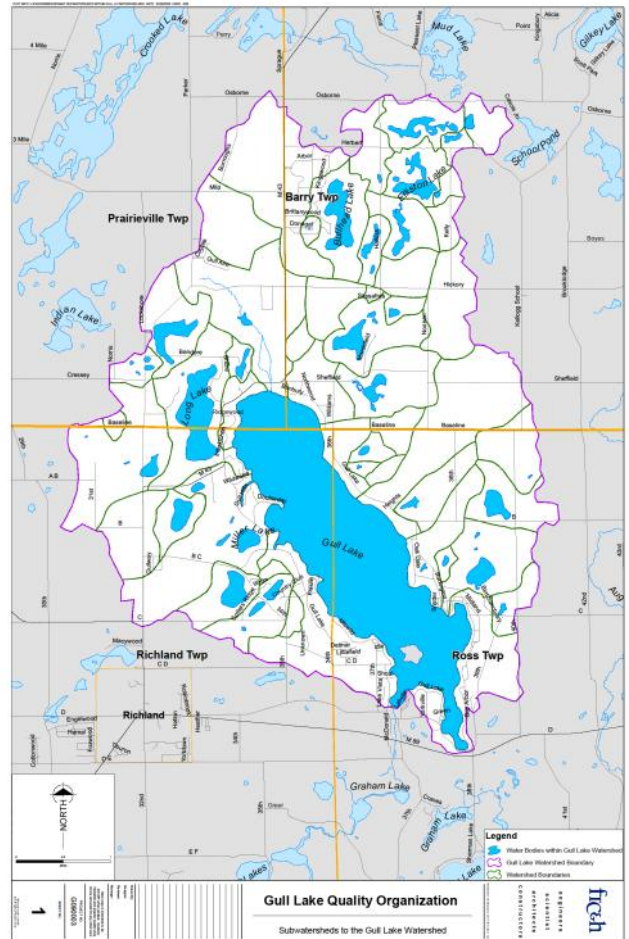
By: *The GLQO Water Quality Committee*

Representatives from the environmental consulting firm of Fishbeck, Thompson, Carr and Huber, Inc. (Fishbeck) provided the GLQO Board of Directors with a water quality testing planning update at the December Board meeting.

As we work to converge on a workable and sustainable water quality monitoring program. Fishbeck has been instrumental in guiding the planning process. While everyone agrees that surface water and ground water monitoring is needed in the Gull Lake Watershed, the key to success is in the planning — much like the basics of journalism, we need to understand:

- **WHAT**, out of the hundreds of compounds and biological agents that we could test for, should we test for?
- **WHERE** should we designate ongoing water testing locations?
- **WHO** should perform the testing, the analysis, the data entry, the data archival?
- **WHEN** should testing be performed, and how often?
- **HOW** much data should be gathered as a baseline before any interpretation is begun?

The Water Quality Committee will be working with Fishbeck, as well as local governmental agencies and MSU's Kellogg Biological Station in the next couple months, to draft recommendations to the Board which frame answers to the above questions. We encourage input from our Members, as well as residents of the Watershed, as this process unfolds.



Surface water monitoring must take into account water flow within dozens of “sub-watersheds” that make up the Gull Lake Watershed.

## From the Desk of the GLQO Treasurer

Water Quality Monitoring will be a cornerstone of GLQO activities in 2010 and beyond, but the science and leg-work behind such testing doesn't come cheap. Please consider augmenting your 2010 dues with a donation that will help us get this very important program off the ground.

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## Upcoming Events at MSU's Kellogg Biological Station

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Our friends over at the Michigan State University Kellogg Biological Station have a number of fun and interesting events happening over this Winter and Spring...

### Birds and Beans at the MSU Kellogg Bird Sanctuary!

This new program, designed for adults, includes a bird walk through the Sanctuary followed by coffee and discussion. Birds and Beans meets the second Wednesday of each month from 8:30 to 10 a.m. Upcoming programs are Wednesdays, Jan. 13, Feb. 10, March 10, April 14, May 12 and June 9. Birders of all skill levels are welcome. Bring your own binoculars or borrow a pair!

Four roasts of Birds & Beans© coffee will be available for sampling after bird walks. Birds & Beans© is Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center certified coffee, meaning it's "bird friendly." Rather than being grown on cleared lands, this shade-grown coffee provides and protects habitat for many migratory birds, such as warblers, vireos and orioles. Birds & Beans© coffee is also USDA certified organic.

Sanctuary members may attend the Birds and Beans programs for free. Cost for non-members is Sanctuary general admission, \$4 for adults and \$2 for senior citizens.

The Bird Sanctuary is located at 12685 East C Avenue, one mile north of M-89 just west of 40th Street and is open to visitors year round.

For more information, contact the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary at 269-671-2510 or email: [birdsantuary@kbs.msu.edu](mailto:birdsantuary@kbs.msu.edu).

Additional information on KBS special events and membership information can be found on the web at [www.kbs.msu.edu](http://www.kbs.msu.edu).

### Art in Nature: Winter Landscapes

Saturday, 23 January 2010, 9:00am - 12:00pm

Enjoy the winter landscape of the Kellogg Forest while learning and practicing the basics of sketching and journaling during four sessions. Focus will be on trees and winter scenes within the Kellogg Forest.

Location : Kellogg Forest

Contact : (269)671-2510 or [birdsantuary@kbs.msu.edu](mailto:birdsantuary@kbs.msu.edu)

Registration required. \$105/new participants, \$95/past Art in Nature participants

### Great Backyard Bird Count - Bird Walk

Monday, 15 February 2010, 9:00am - 11:00am

Participate in this fantastic citizen science project, along with thousands of people throughout the world. Help count the birds on the Sanctuary grounds and then take your knowledge home to count the birds in your backyard. Program begins with an ID presentation and then a hike around the grounds. Bring binoculars and a field guide or borrow from the Resource Center. Dress for the weather.

Location : Kellogg Bird Sanctuary

Contact : (269) 671-2510 or [birdsantuary@kbs.msu.edu](mailto:birdsantuary@kbs.msu.edu)

Free to members, general admission for non-members (\$4/adults, \$2/seniors, \$1/children)

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## Watershed Gallery

By: *The GLQO Librarian*

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The Gull Lake Watershed has some of the most beautiful vistas in this area, and with our new ability to print in full color, we want to share those with our members. If you have a photo, new or old, especially of one of the water bodies within the Watershed, please consider sharing it with us for publication in the Watershed Journal and on our website. Please email photos to [info@glqo.net](mailto:info@glqo.net) with your name and any information about the photo, or send us a copy (which we can scan and return) to P.O. Box 34, Hickory Corners, 49060.



Gull Lake Sunrise © Eric Reid 2007

# Everyday Water Quality For Everyone

By: *Eric Reid*

You may think, after all the coverage in recent years about CAFOs, phosphorus, E. coli, secchi disks, etc., that water quality is only about chemical and biological agents. Moreover, it can easily seem like monitoring and control of water quality is the exclusive province of scientists and biologists.

Well, as a part-time snorkeler in Gull Lake, I can tell you that anyone who lives in or makes use of the Gull Lake Watershed's resources can make an immediate difference most any time, just by keeping an eye out for something less scientific — trash!

The photo at the right is the result of just one snorkel excursion off one dock back in the summer of 2004 (and, no, none of this trash came from us, as best we knew). The beverage containers alone netted \$0.60 at Recycling, and several of the golf balls were reused as practice balls.



Treasure Hunt © Martha Reid 2004

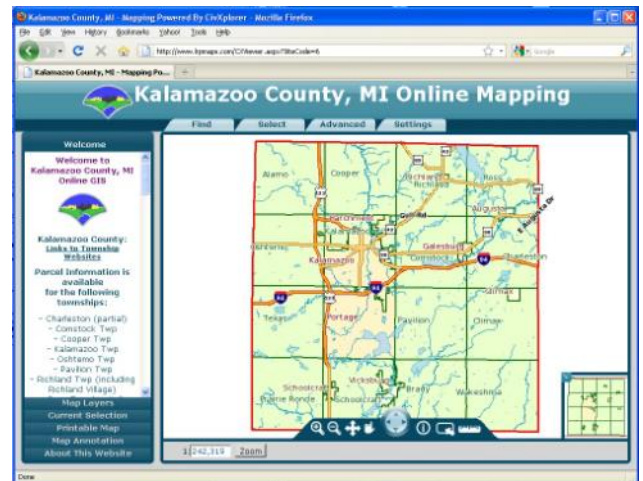
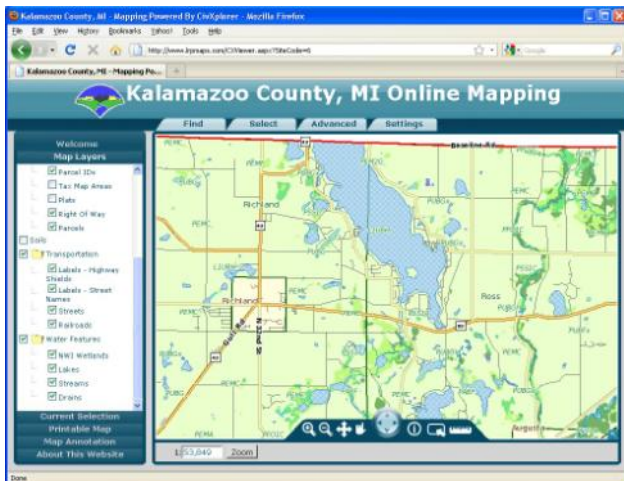
When you see trash in our streams, lakes, beaches or marshes, a quick pick-up can make an immediate positive impact on the Watershed — positive for the water quality, the plant life, the animal life, and our quality of life!

## Webmaster's Page

By: *Eric Reid (webmaster@glqo.net)*

One of my more interesting discoveries of the past few months is the Kalamazoo County online interactive map site at <http://www.kalcounty.com/planning/gis.htm>. Although this site shows, by design, only the Southern part of the Gull Lake Watershed, it is nonetheless very interesting to be able to interactively browse everything from tax parcels to wetland boundaries.

Try it. You might find “map browsing” as addictive as I have!



# Gull Lake Quality Organization

## 2010 Dues Request

***The mission of the Gull Lake Quality Organization is to address concerns and provide education regarding the use of natural resources of the Gull Lake Watershed.***

Please take a moment to provide your contact information below and ...

**THANKS IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!!**

(Please print all information and provide your local mailing address)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

It is not our policy to share your home address information, phone numbers or E-mail address with any other individuals or organizations. However, we do normally publish the names (only) of our members on our website.

Check here if you do not wish to have your name published on the GLQO website.

Check here if you would like to receive The GLQO Watershed Journal by email.

### Individual/Family Membership

\_\_\_ Regular (\$35) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Supporting (\$50 to \$100) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Sponsor (\$125 & Over) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Corporate Membership

\_\_\_ Silver (\$50) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Gold (\$100 to \$200) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Platinum (\$250 & Over) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### *Additional Donations:*

\_\_\_ General Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Sheriff's Patrol \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Water Quality Testing \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_ General Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Sheriff's Patrol \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Water Quality Testing \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you wish to have your donation level kept confidential.

Please mail this form and your check to: GLQO, P.O. Box 34, Hickory Corners, MI 49060

If you have comments or suggestions we would like to hear from you!!

Please visit our website: <http://www.glqo.net>



GLQO  
P.O. Box 34  
Hickory Corners, MI 49060

## The Gull Lake Quality Organization's Board of Directors

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*Fisheries*

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