



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 3, Issue 4

<http://www.glqo.net>

September-December, 2009

Upcoming Events

Oct. 2009

14th—Board Meeting 6:30 PM
Check website for location

20th—KBS Dessert With Discussion
7:30PM

Lyme Disease in Michigan
Dr. Jean Tsao

KBS Education Center Auditorium

Nov. 2009

18th—Board Meeting 6:30 PM
Check website for location

Dec. 2009

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

From the Desk of
the
GLQO President

GLQO is a non-profit organization, It is funded solely through the dues and donations it receives from residents of the Gull Lake Watershed and it is able to operate through the dedication and hard work of its volunteer board members.

Inaugural GLQO Ice Cream Social A Huge Success— Thanks To All!!

The GLQO would like to thank everyone who came out to support us and join us for our first annual ice cream social on August 22nd at Hickory Gables Farm! We especially want to thank our sponsors, and a very special thank you to **Bastiaan and Laura De Jong**, who opened up their farm to all of us.



Sponsors of the 2009 GLQO Ice Cream Social

Platinum Sponsors

Hickory Gables Dairy
Prairie Farms
The Boudeman Family
Bill and Barbara Parfet

Gold Sponsors

Zeeland Farm Services
Gull Lake Marine
John Garside
Martha Parfet

Silver Sponsors

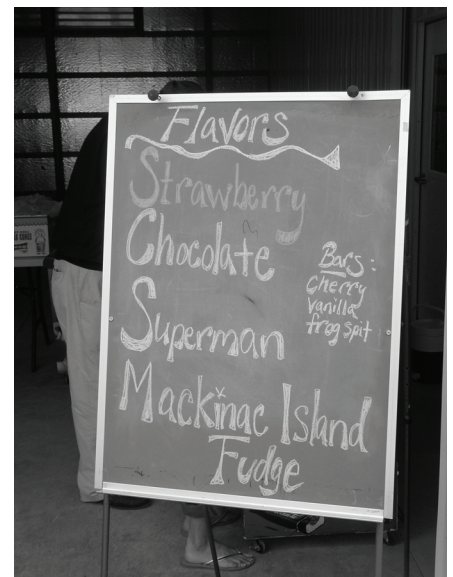
Hamilton Farm Bureau
Hickory Builders
EPI Marketing Services

Special Thanks

Kellogg Biological Station

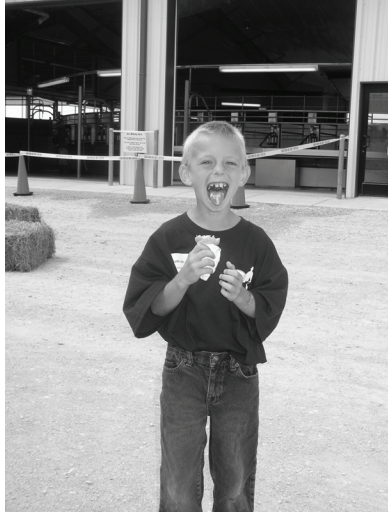
Bronze Sponsors

Progressive Dairy Management
Caledonia Elevator
Bo-Mar Farms
McKay Properties LLC
Honigman Miller
Michelle and Chris Tracy
Gordon Water
Bay View Gardens
Sally Williams
Eric and Martha Reid
Martina and Ryan Johnson
Linda and Ed Cohen
Henry Hawk



A Fundraiser in Words and Pictures

By *Martina Johnson*



The GLQO's initiative to develop and expand the water monitoring program throughout the Gull Lake Watershed was celebrated with our first annual Ice Cream Social at Hickory Gables Dairy Farm on August 22nd.

An educational tour took attendees by bus through the massive free stall barn holding over 1200 cows while Hickory Gables Farm owner Bas DeJong discussed all topics dairy, from daily silage intake to herd pecking order. With representatives from the Kellogg Biological Station, Barry/Eaton County Groundwater Program, and the Gull Lake Quality Organization, visitors discussed how large farms and even our own back yards can affect water quality in our Watershed, and that proper management is essential to the health of that Watershed.

Prairie Farms, which makes its ice cream and other dairy products from the milk produced at Hickory Gables, graciously donated many great flavors of ice cream for all to try. It was truly an experience for all to view the cows being milked on the state-of-the-art turnstile while enjoying a Mackinac Island Fudge cone!

A fun day at the farm ended with a prize drawing for a "Day on Gull Lake". This great package, including the use of a Tri-toon boat, kayaks, skis and water toys for the day, was donated by Gull Lake Marine. Sally Dodgson of Kalamazoo was the winner. Thanks to all who helped make the GLQO's first annual Ice Cream Social a success!



From the Desk of the GLQO Treasurer
Please help us protect and preserve the Gull Lake Watershed by making a donation to the Gull Lake Quality Organization today. Send your donation to:

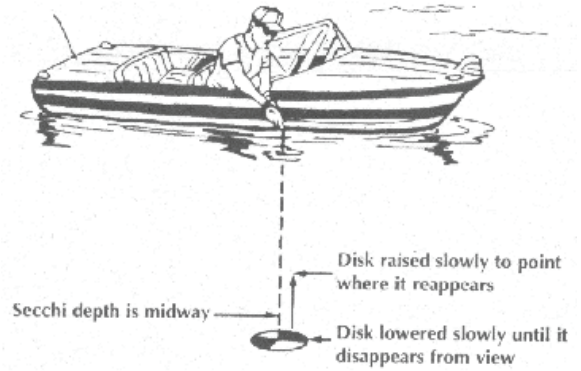
GLQO
P.O. Box 34
Hickory Corners, MI 49060

Water Quality Corner

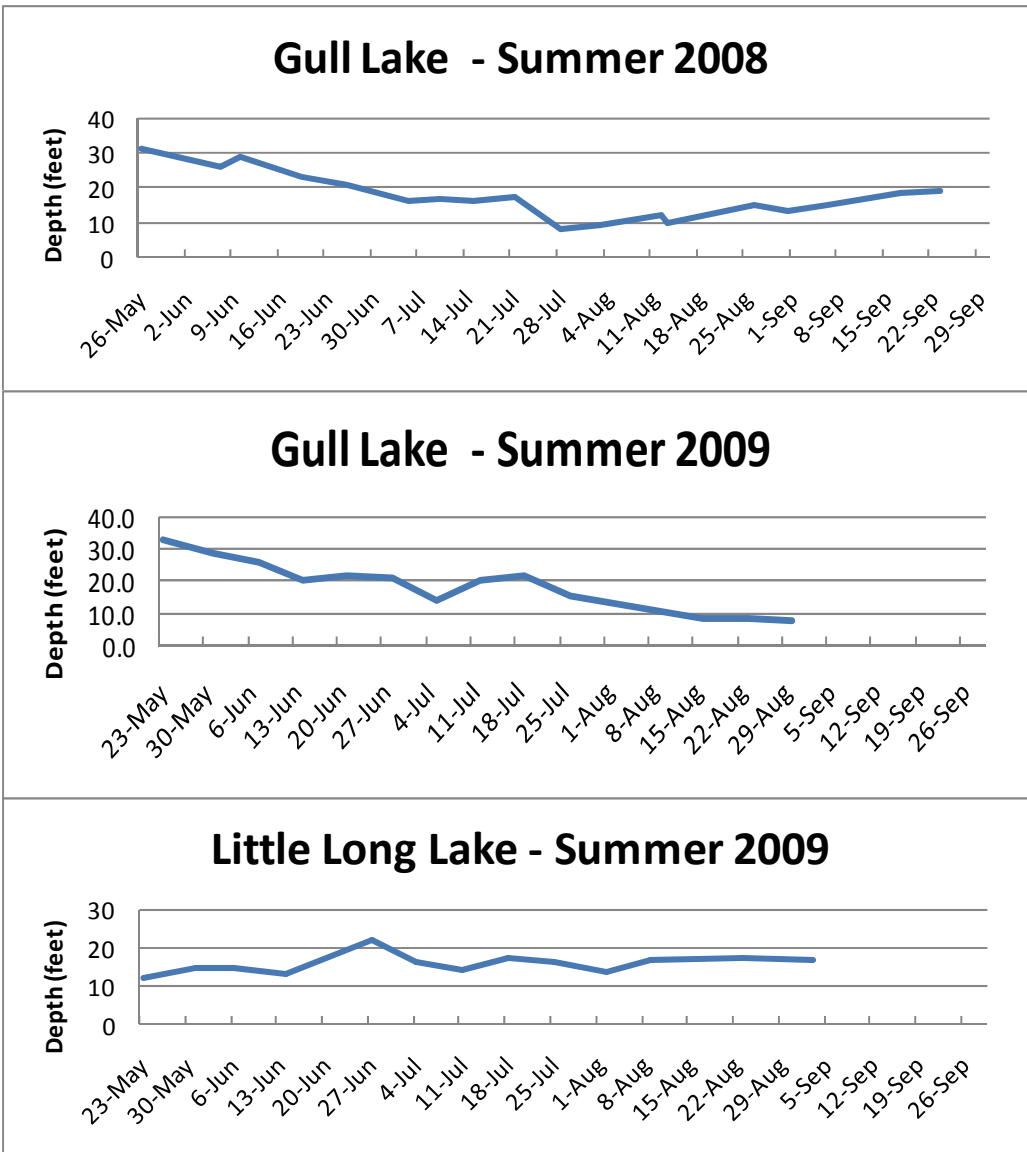
By: Mike Gallagher

Even as the discussions continue this summer around methods and strategies for water quality monitoring in the Gull Lake Watershed, slightly less sophisticated water quality measuring is done quietly at several local lakes.

A **Secchi disk** is a simple device used to determine the clarity of a body of water at any given time. It's no more than a 20cm disk with a specific pattern (see picture). This disk is attached to a pole or thick rope, and lowered into the water until barely visible. The depth of the disk at that point (in feet) is known as the **Secchi depth**, and can be used to compare water clarity between water bodies or between different sample times.



Secchi disk readings have been taken regularly during the summer months on both Gull and Little Long Lakes for several years, and give an idea as to how water clarity changes during the summer months.



The charts to the left represent two years of Secchi disk readings for Gull Lake, and the most recent year for Little Long Lake. While Little Long has tended to show a consistent water clarity, Gull starts very clear, and by mid-summer shows a significant decrease, in large part to the heavy recreational usage.

In general, water clarity can be affected by recent rains and runoff, algae blooms and overall man-made activity on a body of water. It would be safe to say that Secchi disk reading from Gull Lake in the late 1970s would have registered extremely low, due to algae blooms caused by phosphorus overload.

One Resource, Four Townships, A Unified Approach

By: *Jay Garside*

July 30, 2009 proved to be a monumental day for the Gull Lake Watershed. On this day, a meeting occurred involving the four Townships (Ross, Richland, Barry, and Prairieville), Gull Lake Quality Organization, Four Townships Water Resource Council, and LSL (a consulting agency for water resources and government agencies).

The purpose of the meeting was to present the consolidated findings of an LSL study which was funded by the GLQO. The study identified important Township master plan components and zoning ordinances, which affect the quality and character of the watershed. The consolidated findings were presented to the townships, highlighting the areas of disparity, and areas that should be considered during the master plan review process.

During the collaborative meeting involving Township Supervisors, Planners, Planning Commission personnel, and Trustees, all parties were very engaged, interested, and were optimistic on these efforts. Many ideas and concepts were presented and the meeting ended with the motion to continue towards the path of coordinated efforts among all Townships to protect and preserve the Gull Lake Watershed.

A follow-up meeting to continue the effort of coordinating key components of the township master plans, is to be scheduled. This is terrific news all the residents of the Gull Lake Watershed.

KBS and MSU Conducting Biofuels Survey—You Can Participate!

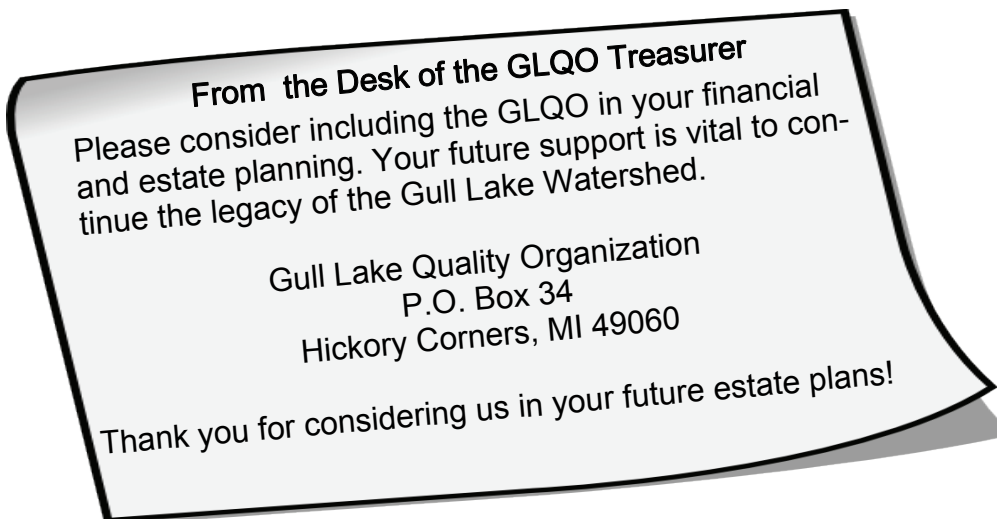
By: *Eric Reid*

Our friends over at Michigan State University's Kellogg Biological Station have asked us to help get out the word for a public survey to be conducted this fall as part of one of their classes. Quoting now from Professor Aaron McCright

“The SOC 368 course, “Science, Technology and Society” — in concert with the MSU KBS ROKS (Residential Opportunities at the Kellogg Station) program — is conducting a survey to determine the awareness, attitude, beliefs and policy preferences regarding cellulosic biofuels.”

In English, this means the public will be surveyed about what they do and don't know about biofuels made from wood, grasses, and other non-edible parts of plants.

If you would be interested in taking their survey, please check on our website at www.glqo.net for more information. This survey is slated to end October 10.



From the Desk of the GLQO Treasurer
Please consider including the GLQO in your financial and estate planning. Your future support is vital to continue the legacy of the Gull Lake Watershed.

Gull Lake Quality Organization
P.O. Box 34
Hickory Corners, MI 49060

Thank you for considering us in your future estate plans!

A Late Summer Dispatch from Our Intrepid Fisherman

By: *"The Anonymous Angler"*

Until the last ten days of August, the fishing had been very good on Gull Lake this summer. It slowed down recently, probably because of the cold weather, but I still caught 5 northerns yesterday morning. It was the strangest August weather I can remember. Although I got out fishing 25 of the last 30 days there were some days that the wind and waves saved the fish. Northern Pike have been hitting my spoons on the downriggers all summer. So far the biggest one was caught by my partner and that was a 42 inch 15-pounder. He probably got that monster that we were all hoping to catch last winter though the ice. It would have been bigger last winter because they slim down during the summer. My biggest so far has been 38". The Pike have been full of crawdads and smelt when I cleaned them and now they are filling my freezer.

Bluegills have been hit or miss and scattered all over the lake. There must be a bunch of them because I haven't found any inside the Pike I've caught. Look for them to school up after Labor Day and fishing to be good through September. It always is.

Bass have hit my spoons down deep. It's a real surprise to be fishing for pike 70 feet down and pull up a 20" smallmouth. It happened last week. We got a nice largemouth, too, at 55 feet.

After reaching 80 degrees a couple weeks ago, the water is now cooling off. It was down to 71 when we hit September and it sure has clouded up too. I can only see down 8 feet which is odd. Late in the summer the clarity of the water gets worse and this summer's weather hasn't helped the water clarity.

I'm frequently seeing huge schools of something on my fish finder. Last week a school filled the screen from the 20' depth to 50 feet. Some big guys were hanging around it too, probably having a feast. If it's what I think they are then I hope our first ice comes in December and then LOOKOUT SMELT!

Enjoy the lake and go wet a line.

You, Our Members, Are Our Eyes and Ears

By: *Eric Reid*

The Gull Lake Watershed covers dozens of square miles, and is comprised of numerous lakes, streams, marshes and other water bodies. Even with unlimited resources, even with numerous programs in place, we still count on our membership — who live throughout the Gull Lake Watershed — to alert us to concerns or problems. We all can make a difference, IF we gather facts, rather than anecdotes, stories or rumors.

- Are you noticing a boater on Gull Lake repeatedly violating marine laws? Make note of the registration number, time/date, location and nature of violation.
- Are you finding an excessive number of dead fish washing up on your shore? Take pictures, note the date and time.
- Have you seen the discharge of animal or industrial waste into any surface water within the watershed? Again, take pictures if you can, and note the time and place.

The GLQO Board of Directors can help our membership take well-documented concerns to the proper authorities, thereby improving the quality of life in the Watershed for ALL of us.

USDA Announces \$58 Million to Improve Water Quality and Quantity in Agricultural Production

By: *Kim Walton , Barry/Eaton County Conservation Districts*

U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service Chief Dave White announced nearly \$58 million for water conservation and water quality improvements on agricultural working lands. The funding includes \$1.5 million targeted to producers in the St. Joseph River and Kalamazoo River watersheds in southwest Michigan.

"We must take steps to protect and preserve our water resources, and the Obama Administration is committed to using this program to provide financial and technical assistance to farmers and ranchers to improve water conditions on their land," said White.

The Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) promotes ground and surface water conservation and improves water quality by helping farmers and ranchers implement agricultural water enhancement activities. With the services and resources of other conservation partners, AWEP allows the Federal Government to leverage investment in natural resources conservation.

The \$1.5 million in funding for Michigan will be used as financial assistance for producers to implement conservation measures that reduce water use and improve water quality. The first sign up for eligible producers were held August 3 to August 21 apply for the financial assistance at their local USDA Service Center. **Though the program is not currently open, producers may start the application process for the next round at any time.**

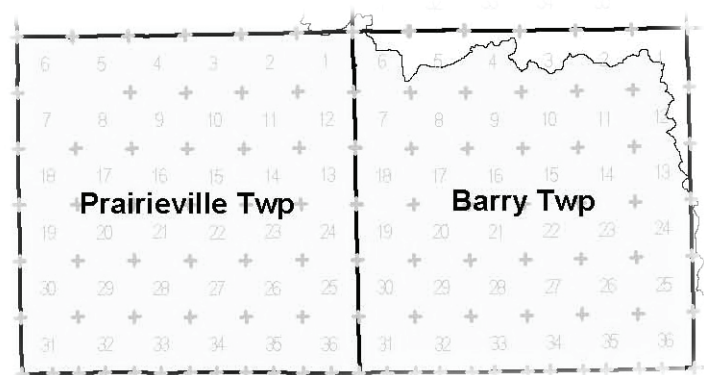
The St. Joseph River and Kalamazoo River watersheds in Michigan include Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph and Van Buren counties and portions of Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Eaton, Hillsdale, Jackson, Kent and Ottawa counties. Additional AWEP funding is available for Indiana counties within the watersheds.

Landowners can obtain funding through AWEP for several types of projects, including:

- Water quality or water conservation plan development, including resource condition assessment and modeling;
- Water conservation restoration or enhancement projects, including conversion to the production of less water-intensive agricultural commodities or dry land farming;
- Water quality or quantity restoration or enhancement projects;
- Irrigation system improvement or irrigation efficiency enhancement;
- Activities designed to mitigate the effects of drought and climate change; and
- Other related activities deemed by the Secretary to help achieve water quality or water conservation benefits on agricultural land.

AWEP was established by the 2008 Farm Bill and funding comes from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service administers the program. Though participating AWEP producers do not need to have existing EQIP contracts, they must be eligible for EQIP. All partner proposals were selected competitively.

Additional information, including a map showing the area eligible for AWEP financial assistance and a listing of USDA Service Centers, can be found at www.mi.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip.html.



Qualifying Areas in Prairieville and Barry Townships

Gull Lake Quality Organization

2009 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) 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 (\$25) \$ _____

___ 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 \$ _____

Additional Donations:

___ General Donation \$ _____

___ Sheriff's Patrol \$ _____

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>

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

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