

MLSA News - September 2020

From: MLSA (info@mymlsa.org)

To: sciencechick01@yahoo.com

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The registration deadline is Friday, September 11th, sign up to join us for three days full of inland lake content - there is something to fill everyone's tool box.

[See the full program here](#) and see you at the convention!

MLSA Organization Survey - We Want to Hear from You!

Please take a few minutes to share your thoughts about Michigan Lakes and Streams Association. We want to know your opinion on *The Michigan Riparian* magazine, this newsletter, our publications, our website, everything! This organization exists because of your generous support, you can help us envision the future.

[Take the Survey](#)

Southwest (Region 3)

Fall Zoom Meeting

Need some help with your lake issues? Want to see what membership with MLSA is all about?

When: Saturday, September 26, 2020 09:30 AM to 12:00 PM Eastern Time

[Register in advance for this meeting](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Invasive European frog-bit found in Mid-Michigan

Boaters, waterfowl hunters and anglers can help prevent further spread

Thanks to Michigan DNR's [Joanne Foreman](#) for providing this article.

The Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy recently confirmed the presence of European frog-bit, an aquatic invasive plant, in four lakes within the Waterloo Recreation Area in Jackson and Washtenaw counties and

one impoundment in the Dansville State Game Area in Ingham County. Aquatic invasive species have the potential to harm Michigan's environment, economy and human health. European frog-bit, which resembles a miniature water lily with leaves about the size of a quarter, can form dense mats on the surface of slow-moving waters like bayous, backwaters and wetlands. These mats can impede boat traffic and alter food and habitat for ducks and fish.

Spreading across Michigan

European frog-bit was first detected in southeast Michigan in 1996 and has since spread along the coastal areas of lakes Erie and Huron up to the eastern Upper Peninsula.

In 2016, the plant was discovered in Reeds and Fisk lakes in East Grand Rapids. It was found in several small bodies of water in Oakland County in 2018 and in the Lower Grand River in Ottawa County and Pentwater Lake in Oceana County in 2019.

While waterfowl, currents and stream flow can spread the plant and its seeds, European frog-bit, like most invasive species, travels farther and faster by human movement. Plant parts and seeds can become attached to boat motors, trailers, decoys and other recreational gear in an infested body of water and be transferred unintentionally to another location.

What is being done

To date, EGLE staff has completed surveys of bodies of water in the Dansville State Game Area and Waterloo and Pinkney state recreations areas, as well as most lakes with public access in the area, finding no additional infestations. All visible frog-bit plants were successfully removed by hand from Mills Lake, but due to heavy infestations, Mud, Green and Winnewanna lakes and the Dansville State Game Area impoundment require more intensive response options that cannot be completed in 2020.

Survey and removal efforts are ongoing in West Michigan, where crews from the West Michigan Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) and the Gun Lake Tribe are working with EGLE to remove or treat infestations

around heavily used boating access sites and to protect culturally and ecologically significant sites like wild rice beds in the Lower Grand River. The Oakland County CISMA is continuing its survey of lakes and wetlands and has begun controlling the invasive plant in some infested areas.

What you can do

To prevent further spread of European frog-bit, boaters, waterfowl hunters and anglers should “[Clean, Drain and Dry](#)” boats, trailers and gear before moving them to a new location.

State law now requires boaters to do the following before transporting any watercraft over land:

- Remove all drain plugs from bilges, ballast tanks and live wells.
- Drain all water from live wells and bilges.
- Ensure the watercraft, trailer and all conveyances are free of aquatic organisms, including plants.

If you spend time on or around the water, learn how to identify European frog-bit and report any sightings using the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network website at MISIN.MSU.edu or the MISIN downloadable app. When reporting, be sure to note the date, time and location of the sighting and take photos if possible.

Reports also can be made to EGLE’s Aquatic Invasive Species Program by email to EGLE-WRD-ANC@michigan.gov or by calling 517-284-5593.

To find out more about [European frog-bit](#) and other aquatic invasive species, visit Michigan.gov/Invasives.

Michigan’s Invasive Species Program is cooperatively implemented by the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy, the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Agriculture & Rural Development.

Wishing Everyone a Safe

Labor Day Weekend!

[Conservation officers share important water safety tips](#)

There is still plenty of time this summer and fall to safely enjoy Michigan's lakes, rivers and streams. After several water rescues this summer, [Michigan conservation officers](#) share water safety reminders in their video. MLSA was also informed by the [White Lake Citizens League](#) of two boating related fatalities in Oakland County during the month of August. Please stay safe out on the water.

EGLE Sends to Governor Initial Status Report on Failed Dams

Thanks to [Nick Assendelft](#), EGLE Public Information Officer for this article.

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) has submitted to Gov. Gretchen Whitmer its status report summarizing the department's actions during and following the failures of the Edenville and Sanford dams in mid-Michigan in May, and outlining the status of reviews of the state's dam safety operations.

The [Preliminary Report on the Edenville Dam Failure, Response Efforts, and Program Reviews](#), which was sent to the governor on Monday, is the first in a series of reports that EGLE will receive from an independent forensic investigation team, the Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO), and the newly formed Michigan Dam Safety Task Force with programmatic, safety and procedural recommendations related to dams in Michigan and EGLE's role in regulating more than 1,050 structures.

"EGLE staff have been on the ground since Day One of this tragedy and we will continue to do all that we can to help the residents of mid-Michigan and the communities in which they live, work and play," said EGLE Director Liesl Clark. "We will continue to support, in an open and transparent way, the search for answers as to how these dam failures happened and why. We will

also thoroughly review any recommendations and findings in future reports with an eye toward improving our department programs and overall dam safety in Michigan.”

The Edenville Dam status report details how EGLE has responded in the three and a half months since the dams failed, causing a 500-year flood in Midland and Gladwin counties that displaced more than 11,000 people, impacted approximately 2,500 structures and caused an estimated \$250 million in damages. In the days, weeks and months after the flooding and dam failure events, EGLE staff continue to work with local, state, and federal agencies and others to perform additional assessments of public safety, transportation, natural resources damages and to assist in recovery efforts.

Among EGLE’s actions on its own or in conjunction with stakeholders:

- Agreed to a plan to modify and partially breach the spillway on the Tobacco river side of the remaining portion of the Edenville Dam. This will restore flow to the downstream Tobacco River reach, alleviate strain on the collapsed M-30 bridges, minimize upstream impacts and address dam safety concerns. The work plan, expected to be completed this year, was decided on as the best solution following an assessment by EGLE, the Michigan Department of Transportation and AECOM engineers. The plan will ensure public safety and address ongoing impacts to transportation and natural resources.
- Approved members of the Independent Forensic Investigation team and will fulfill all information requests from investigators. The team was put under contract in early August by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) after Boyce Hydro, which owns the two failed dams and two others nearby, failed to put the investigative team under contract as required. A report is due within the next 12-18 months.
- Collaborated with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to deploy teams on and along the area’s river and lake bottomlands to assess the extent of environmental resource damages to support recovery efforts and enforcement actions.
- Enlisted the services of the Association of State Dam Safety Officials’ Peer Review Committee to perform a thorough evaluation of Michigan’s Dam Safety Program, looking at the mission and goals of the program, budget and staffing levels, organizational structure, and strength of laws and procedures. A final report is expected this month.

- Begun the process of hiring a third dam safety engineer in EGLE's Dam Safety Program to help oversee more than 1,000 state-regulated dams.
- Created a Michigan Dam Safety Task Force of key dam safety stakeholders from the public, private, academic, tribal and environmental sectors to share their experience and expertise to improve dam safety in Michigan. A final report is anticipated in early 2021.
- Working collaboratively with the Michigan State Police's Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division, DNR, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) and Department of Transportation (DOT) on recovery efforts to remove debris to help return the impacted area to pre-disaster conditions as much as possible.
- Collaborated with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on individual and public financial assistance and National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) community assistance as well as provided information about increased cost of compliance (ICC) coverage, substantial damage, floodplain requirements for rebuilding, repair of structures, and State floodplain permit requirements.
- Evaluated the potential new release of hazardous wastes and contaminants from the Dow Chemical site in Midland and the effects of the 2020 flood on the Tittabawassee River, Saginaw River and Bay Superfund Site with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and others.
- Providing post-flood recovery assistance to reopen damaged roads, including joint field inspections with state and local public transportation agencies and recommendations regarding replacement structure sizing and geometry to minimize environmental resource impacts and improve resiliency for future flood events. EGLE has issued permits for repairs or replacements at 14 of the 43 damaged road and/or stream crossings in six mid-Michigan counties.
- Developed and regularly updating an Edenville Dam failure webpage, which includes an interactive map of all state-regulated dams in Michigan, news releases, webinars and other important resources.
- Aided residents with outreach efforts such as webinars on recovery resources and permitting rules, holding bi-weekly community updates with local legislators and officials, collaborating with FEMA on rebuilding funding and responded to numerous legislative inquiries and committee hearings.

EGLE will continue to cooperate with local, state and federal officials on future actions that will help the residents and businesses of mid-Michigan recover from the devastating floods.

Stay up to date with future developments at [EGLE's Edenville Dam Failure webpage](#).

Our next issue of *The Michigan Riparian* magazine will take a look at the dam failure in Mid-Michigan and a private dam project on Gull Lake in the Southwest. Click "Join MLSA Today" below to get your copy.

Michigan Lakes and Streams Association, Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit, state-wide organization dedicated to the preservation, protection, and wise management of Michigan's vast treasure of inland lakes.

Ready to help us protect Michigan's waterways?

Join MLSA Today

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