



WINTER 2022

TLPA Work on Torch Lake Water Quality Continues

TLPA is pleased to announce that it has established a "Letter of intent" to work with the United States Geological Society (USGS) on an extensive, "long-term" Torch Lake Monitoring and Assessment Plan with an opportunity to kick things off this spring.

TLPA is also working with a steering Committee with representatives from Torch Conservation Center (TCC) and Three Lakes Association (TLA) to review and recommend to their respective Board of Directors projects for collaboration. We are excited to have three organizations committed to the protection and preservation of Torch Lake.

Working together with USGS is a positive opportunity, including the fact that USGS brings the reputation, power and clout needed to achieve success.

To address our shared concerns around lake health in general and Golden-Brown Algae in particular, we have established a working group that will meet June 10, and includes representatives from USGS, TLPA, TCC, TLA, the DNR, Tip of the Mitt, The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (MEGLE), Dr. Jan Stevenson, Steve Chapra, and Dr. Ann St. Amand, founder of PhycoTech, who will deliver this year's keynote at **TLPA's GEM event June 11**.

The costs of this **Long-Term Monitoring and Assessment Program** far exceed the resources of TLPA. While we are collaborating with TCC and TLA to hopefully offset the costs of the project, we will need to rely on additional funds from our membership. Every donation counts, and if you wish to make a major gift to support our efforts, we'd love to hear from you (**TLPA.CO**). If you have questions or want more details, please contact Tom Joseph by email at torchlaketomj@gmail.com **or** call at 248-909-4941. **We all know Torch Lake is worth it!**



Photo Credit: Kevin Shumrick

Membership Renewal

You should have received your renewal notice for 2022. If you have already renewed, we thank you. If not, we ask that you do so as soon as possible. Our membership year runs from January to the end of December; dues remain at \$100. TLPA membership is an inexpensive insurance policy to help protect your investment on Torch Lake and your riparian rights.

In 2022, we will continue our emphasis on educating our members about the need to reduce the amount of excess nutrients that enter the lake and the importance of shoreline buffers and maintenance of their septic system.

We will continue to monitor township activities that impact Torch. The proposed RV park at the south end of the lake is a good example. TLPA and TESA have been successful in convincing Milton Township to reevaluate the wisdom of allowing an 80 site RV park in a congested area.

We will continue to monitor activities on the sandbar, and to pay for port-a-johns, trash dumpsters and police overtime during the 4th of July.

Our efforts to find the cause and solutions to Golden Brown Algae is a high priority as is controlling and eliminating invasive species such as Eurasian Watermilfoil.

You can renew online at **TLPA.CO** or send a check. Our mailing address is TLPA, PO Box 706. Bellaire, MI 49615. Also in our efforts to protect and preserve Torch Lake, we encourage you to help us recruit your friends and neighbors to become TLPA members. We have many issues facing us in our efforts to protect and preserve Torch Lake, and there truly is strength in numbers. Please renew as soon as possible; it saves us time and expense that is better used protecting the lake. If you have any questions, please contact Bruce Hulteen bmhulteen@gmail.com (616 560-3952).

Welcome New Members

Mark & Marilyn Jasonowicz

Kevin Celarek

Margy Mertz

Nancy Eitzen

Lynne & Dale Harbour

Dave J. Howland

James T. Leto

Steve Moster

James Schofield

Hans Keller

Judy Verhage

Michael Somers

Gregory Movsesian

James & Gail Straith

David & Robin Hescheles

Joseph & Natash Ursuy

Rick & Liz Kickert

Leann Bigos

Sharon & Bill Hill

Meta Steeb

TLPA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alisa Carroll, President

Dave Martin, Vice President

Bob Milliron, Secretary

Norm Neuenschwander, Treasurer

Rick Welsh

Dan Sajkowski

Kathy Shumrick

Bruce Hulteen

Randy Asmus

Dave Nussdorfer

Tom Joseph

Mission of TLPA

To preserve the beauty of Torch Lake and its watershed and to protect its environment for the enjoyment of all



TLPA.CO

Have you checked out our new website yet?

We have received great feedback about our new website. Thank you for your patience while we made some major changes to the site. Did you know that at TLPA.CO you can:

- Make instant changes to your TLPA membership. You can renew or modify it.
- You can make a recurring donation or one-time donation to support the vital work that TLPA is doing.
- View *and support* the great business members that believe in the mission of TLPA and support our activities.
- Get the latest news updates about the many activities that TLPA is involved in.
- View members of the TLPA Board and Committees.

Clearwater Township Update: *Torch Lake Tiki*

During the summer of 2021, a riparian non-resident property owner on Crystal Beach Road, adjacent to the Division Street access road-end, began operating a business on the property. He called it *Torch Lake Tiki* and he is in the business of selling food on the sand bar from his food barge and renting kayaks and pontoons from a short-term rental trailer on the property. This drew the attention of local residents and TLPA.

Operating a business in an R-1 zoned property is not illegal if it meets certain township requirements. If the person lives on the property and it does not change the residential character or create a nuisance, then the property owner is free to operate the business.

These requirements were not met by the owner of the *Torch Lake Tiki*. Area residents lobbied their township officials to close the business. After a thorough investigation, Clearwater Township officials concluded that the business violated local ordinances and issued a cease-and-desist letter to the owner. Hopefully, this order will be followed. This is a heads-up that all property owners around the lake need to be aware of activities happening in their neighborhoods to assure the lake is respected in order to maintain its quality and safety for all users.

Milton Township Planning Commission Rejects RV Park

On January 24, 2022 after a five-hour session, the Milton Township Planning Commission (PC) took their vote on the proposed 70 site RV park Special Use Permit (SUP) on a 10-acre site located between Torch River Rd and Miller Rd. The vote was a unanimous rejection of the SUP. This is the second time a SUP for the park was rejected. The initial request was for an 80-site park that was unanimously rejected on July 13, 2021.

According to Bill Hefferan, Planning Commission Chair, the RV park was not in compliance with township zoning ordinances. Of major concern to the PC was the impact on the topography of the area necessary to accommodate the park. The area is on a ridge line with numerous steep slopes that present a potential hazard.

Significant changes to the property have occurred over the last couple of years without a SUP. Trees and vegetation have been removed and major changes to the topography were made to create the potential RV sites. A second road access off Miller Rd. was created. All these unapproved alterations resulted in major water and sediment runoffs from heavy rains on August 10, 2021, which flowed onto a neighbor's property and across Torch River Rd into state- and privately-owned wetlands. This was the second such occurrence, the first being in July 2020; the developer was cited with a violation by EGLE and sued by a property owner.

Significant public comment both in writing and in person has been made in opposition to the park. Long meetings were held on January 3 and again on January 24 when residents and nearby property owners voiced their concerns. Acceptance or rejection of the SUP is not based on public opinion but on compliance with all township zoning ordinances. However, such strong public opposition, especially when appropriately supported by references to township ordinances, cannot but leave an impression on PC members.

So, what can we expect next? Several court cases are in the works. The developer has filed suit in Circuit Court after the initial rejection of the 80-site plan citing the PC decision violated township ordinances, state law, and the U.S. Constitution. According to the lawsuit, the denial was too vague and followed improper procedures imposing standards that were not specified by Milton Township ordinances. Torch Elk Skegemog Alliance (TESA) has filed suit against the developer and Antrim County Conservation District to stop further work on the camp site. The neighboring property owner has a lawsuit to recover damages caused by the sediment runoff onto his property.

Future options to the developer include filing for a new SUP and park plan that meets all ordinances, finding a new property or just giving up. TESA meanwhile is investigating what it might do to block further development. TLPA is supporting this activity. If you are interested in supporting TESA financially, you can donate as follows:

DONATE SECURELY ONLINE:

Online donations may be made by credit card or bank account debit.

Go to tesa.org and enter TESA in File Number Box on the website form. This payment method is secure.

DONATE BY MAIL:

Make check out to Olson, Bzdok & Howard, P.C. (Write TESA in memo line).

Mail to: Olson, Bzdok & Howard, P.C.

420 East Front St. , Traverse City MI 49686

Tracking is advised for large checks.

NEED HELP?

If you need help making your donation or wish to contribute by phone, call 231-946-0044.

TLPA 2022 Events

JUNE 11, 2022 – GREET, EDUCATE, MEET (GEM)

LOCATION: A-GA-MING EVENT FACILITY located at 627 A-Ga-Ming Dr. Take US 31 to McLachlan Rd. and turn east then left onto A-Ga-Ming Drive

TIME: 9:30 - Finish

OUR SPECIAL GUEST: World renowned algae expert DR. ANN ST. AMAND Ph.D., CLP, of PHYCOTECH, who will present her findings of 2020 **“Torch Lake Protection Alliance Nutrient and Algal Sampling Study”** and answer questions from the audience.

Dr. Ann St. Amand, Ph.D., CLP, will relate her experience in aquatic ecology and share her insights about Torch Lake and how it is changing and evolving, and what we can all do to protect it for generations to come. Dr. St. Amand earned her BS in Ecology, Evolutionary and Population Biology from Purdue University and received her Ph.D. in Aquatic Ecology from the University of Notre Dame. She is founder and head of research at PhycoTech in St. Joseph, MI, where she processes all manual algal and zooplankton samples at the facility and conducts algal taxonomy workshops.

Please mark your calendars for what is sure to be a rich and eye-opening discussion.

We also will have a brief presentation on our plans for a continuing “Long Term Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for Torch Lake”

AUGUST 2, 2022 – TASTE OF TORCH (TOT)

Details to follow in upcoming Spring/Summer newsletters and TLPA website.



Torch Lake Winter 2022

Support Our Business Members

A-Ga-Ming Golf Resort
Alden State Bank
Barker Creek Nursery & Landscaping
Birch Street Dental
BlueFin Residential Services (BlueFin Custom Painting)
Chemical Control Co.
The Chief Golf Course/BluePelican
Creative Characters Printing
Don Fedrigo Re/Max of Elk Rapids
Draper Construction, Inc.
Echo Quality Grinding
Elk Rapids Electric
Fitzpatrick Insurance Agency
Grace of Alden
Kidd & Leavy Real Estate
Lake Living Services, Inc.
Mapleridge Construction
Mico's Torch Riviera
Nicolas Halek Realtor-Coldwell Banker Schmidt Realtors
North Country Power Generators
Northshore Dock
Pine Hill Nursery
Short's Brewing Company
TCarea.com Realty
Top Notch Heating, Cooling, and Geothermal
Urban Diversions
Village Market Food Centers

Welcome Dan Sajkowski, New TLPA Board Member

Dan and his wife Eileen bought lake frontage on the west side of Torch about 25 years ago and re-built 15 years ago. However, he has known the lake his entire life. His family vacationed on Torch annually through the 50's and 60's. When his grandson recently swam in Torch, that moment marked 5 generations of his family that have done so. Dan retired about 12 twelve years ago. Prior to that, he led large organizations as a senior executive at Amoco and BP. His BSE and MSE are from the University of Michigan and PhD from Stanford University. Eileen and Dan have been married for 40 years.



Memorials

PHILLIP DAY

Marilyn Heim
Karen Richardson

JOAN CURRAN

Kathleen Curran

MARY HUNTINGTON

Sue Wilson

VIRGINIA HOGAN

Phil & Kris Elbert
Jennifer Haskell

BARRY GODWIN

Mary Katie Roth

JEANNA HONER

Mary Katie Roth

JOANN MAYER

Virginia Mouch

JACK & JOANN MAYER

David & Marilyn Nussdorfer

ROBERT McLEAN

Mary E. McLean
Tom & Donna Lambert
Sallie & Steve Foley

TERRY MALONE

Mary Katie Roth
Warren & Nancy Icke
F. Verne Powell
Virginia Mouch
John & Barbara Carton
Gus & Mary Blanchard
Mary, Bruce & Jeffery Byl
Mary Richards
Steven & Katherine Huges
Jill Porter & Robert Marsh
Bruce & Judith Renquist
John Norlander & David Norlander
Dorothy Moll

TERRY MALONE (continued)

Barbara Manning
Montessori Children's, Grand Traverse
Willard Walker
Walker Group
Donna Long
Gary & Linda Bokerman
Roy & Susan Nichols
Ted & Joy Whittlesey
George & Nancy Powell
Ron & Linda Lanphier
Helen Truesdell & Bill Garrett
Carol Killmaster

LOIS & BOB HAEFNER

James & Gail Straith

IN HONOR OF GARY PETTY

Graham & Rachel Petty