

# BLACK LAKE NEWS

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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989-370-4949

ROGER SELVIG—VICE President  
989-329-7882

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517-881-3995

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248-515-4726

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MEMBERSHIP/NEWSLETTER  
989-733-2565

CINDY TREPANIER—989-370-  
7153

RON DULAK—989-733-2565

ERIN MC LEAN—989-619-9146

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Linda Van Sickle

Banquet

Connie Nadjarian

Black Lake Cheboygan MI

Facebook—Jim Filipowski

Lake Monitoring

Bob Williams

Swimmer's Itch

Cindy Trepanier—Gail Smith

Fish Committee

Erin Mc Lean

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

BRETT TREPANIER 989-370-4949

Winter is upon us, with Spring following close behind. We have had very mild temperatures this winter and the warm weather, prior to the sturgeon season, had the rivers flowing with silt filled water flowing into the lake. The Wednesday before the season the water was near perfect, but by Saturday it was cloudy. While there were a record number of anglers, 472, the cloudy water reduced visibility and thus the season lasted longer than previous years. Thinner than normal ice conditions kept anglers from driving trucks on the ice. At an average of 10 inches of ice, snowmobiles

and ATVS were good to go. There were no reports of any machines going through the ice.

We are monitoring the walleye population along with the DNR Fisheries Division. We will continue to gather information on reproduction as well as push for more stocking of walleye in Black Lake. The money used to stock walleye comes from the fish fund donations that are separate from the general fund. The Fisheries biologist will be speaking at our September meeting.

The water level on Black Lake continues to be a concern

and we also know that the water level on the Great Lakes is a concern. The Black Lake Association, (BLA) has been involved with all of the discussions which have taken place concerning the operation of the Alverno Dam and water level. There are new protocols being implemented and several tests have been performed. Our June meeting will focus on this subject .

We are looking forward to another very productive and energetic year , hoping to see all of you at our monthly meetings. Volunteers are always needed.

## UPDATE FROM THE MDNR FISHERIES DIVISION

TIM CWALINSKI

989-732-3541 EXT 5072

This summer Black Lake is on our list to be surveyed under what is known as our Status and Trends survey protocol for DNR. This is where the lake size dictates the gear types and amount of time we spend on the lake. If all the large lakes (1,000 ACRES OR MORE) are done in a similar fashion statewide , then results can be more comparable statewide or within a region. Large lakes done with this protocol in our coverage area include Crooked Lake, Burt Lake, Mullet Lake, Hubbard Lake Grand Lake, Long Lake Alpena County, and Fletcher Floodwaters to name a few. This list is generated by a computer and once completed,

the lake moves down the list. It just so happens to be Black Lake's turn in 2020. NOTE: this is not a survey that focuses on one species, like walleye or sturgeon. It is a more broad view of all the species of the lake, which means we will use a broad variety of gear types such as : trap nets (variable meshes), seines, experimental gill nets with small mesh, and night-time electrofishing. We will also collect a temperature and dissolved oxygen profile of Black Lake in the peak of summer. Be on the lookout for our marked survey gear this early June.

We also hope to continue

electrofishing the shoreline of Black Lake on night this fall. We have traditional route from Five Mile Point south and then east to the Rainy River mouth that has been surveyed for over ten years in a row now. The collection of juvenile (age 0) walleye per hour of electrofishing provides us a valuable look into wild walleye recruitment (in a non-stocking year) or stocked fish survival (in a stocking year). We have yet to see a big wild class produced in Black Lake in recent years and have stocking listed as a possible management practice this spring (if production is available).



## RECOMMENDATIONS

To minimize the impact and potential damage of high water levels in the spring, we recommend putting your docks, hoists, and boats in no earlier than the end of May.

If you want to prevent further shoreline erosion, a number of good resources are available online, including the Michigan Shoreline Partnership at

Www.

[mishorelinepartnership.org](http://mishorelinepartnership.org)



## 472 ANGLERS PARTICIPATED IN THE STURGEON SHIVEREE ACTIVITIES

- Mike Jewell 75" Tagged Female, 100 lbs.
- Chris Wilson 65" Tagged Female, 57 lbs.
- Dan Mose 60" Tagged Male, 51 lbs.
- Cole Hudson 49" Male, 24 lbs.
- David Schmidt 47" Female, 19 lbs.
- Mike Crawford 44" Tagged Male, 16 lbs.

Brenda Archambo, Sturgeon for Tomorrow President estimated 2,000 people participated .

# WATER LEVELS ON BLACK LAKE

DAVE TURZEWSKI 517-881-3995

Water levels in and around the Great Lakes continue to be a concern for many lake property owners, and Black Lake is no exception. Unlike the year-round historically high levels currently seen on Lakes Michigan and Huron, water levels on Black Lake are more of a concern during the spring thaw, when a quick thaw after a long, cold winter can cause the lake to rise very quickly and during a hot, dry summer when the lake levels recede. In the first instance, this water combined with high winds and sometimes ice, can cause shoreline erosion and damage to docks and hoists, while in the second instance, a hot, dry summer can leave our boats inaccessible and stranded on their hoists.

Black Lake property owners have dealt with high water levels in the spring for as long as there have been homes on the lake. In fact, several areas around the lake are in FEMA designated flood zones. Numerous studies, reports and papers have been written over the past 60 years researching the potential impact the Alverno Dam has on high water levels and if the dam can be used to prevent damaging high water levels in the future. Based on the conclusions of many experts, including the United States Geological Survey, the Michigan Department of Conservation, United Associates Inc Architects Engineering Surveyors, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, The Water Management Division of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and H.S. Santeford, Ph. D. and G. R. Alger, Ph.D., there are limits on what the dam can do to lower the lake level and how

quickly it can do it.

In spite of these previous conclusions, the Black Lake Association (BLA) continues to monitor the water levels on Black Lake and participates in an ongoing working group that is focused on finding a reasonable operating protocol for the dam that minimizes the potential for high water in the spring and low water in the summer, to best serve the interests of all. The working group includes Black River Hydro LP, owner of the Alverno Dam, Black Lake Preservation Society, The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Cheboygan and Presque Isle Counties.

Currently, the dam is operated under a 1965 Court Order that dictates a winter level of 610.2 feet above sea level and a summer level of 612.2 above sea level. But controlling the lake level with the dam during high water events is complicated by several facts, including the vast size of the Black Lake watershed, and the existence of the Smith Rapids, which acts as a natural constriction that restricts water flowing to the dam. So, a more detailed operational protocol is being explored that focuses on the level of the dam's head pond, which can be directly controlled by the dam, to influence the level of Black Lake.

However history tells us that the dam alone cannot prevent high spring lake levels. Data shows that from 1960 to 1983 the dam was not operational. The spill gate was wide open from approximately 1964 to 1982 when peak

lake levels equaled or exceeded 613 feet above sea level in 16 out of 24 years. ( 1960, 1962, 1963, 1965, 1967, 1971, 1972, 1974-1980, 1982 and 1983. During these years, when the dam was not operational and the spill gate was open, there is a strong correlation of lake levels compared to cumulative precipitation levels during below freezing winter periods. While it remains to be seen if a new protocol can help mitigate damage from high water spring events, in any event, it is clear that mother nature has the final say.

Another factor being considered in a new operating protocol is trying to prevent a lake level that is too low coming into a summer season. If this happens, followed by a dry spell, the result would be low lake levels that would prevent the launching of boats or leave them stranded on hoists. We also want to avoid an operating protocol that puts the existing dam in jeopardy of operational failure, leaving the lake in the total control of mother nature.

The Black Lake Association is working closely with all parties, and our goal is to achieve a sound, rational, operating protocol based on established facts and science, one that best represents the interests of all of Black Lakes's constituents.



You can find additional details, facts and figures on the effort to effect high water levels at our website:

Www.

[blacklakeassociation.com](http://blacklakeassociation.com)

# BLACK LAKE WATER QUALITY

CAROLINE KESON

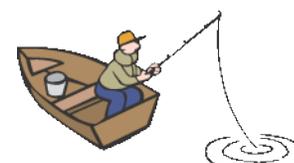
TIP OF THE MITT WATERSHED COUNCIL



### What should I do if I think I see an algal bloom?

- Although most algal blooms are not harmful, some can be.
- Avoid direct body contact with algae in the lake or water that is blue-green or looks like it has a green sheen or spilled paint on the surface. It may contain flecks, foam or clumps.
- Stay out of the water that may have an algal bloom.
- Do not let your children or pets play in that area, nor the debris on the shore.
- Never swallow any lake or river water, whether you see a bloom or not.
- Do not let pets lick algal bloom from their fur.
- Do not drink or cook lake water.
- Call the Gaylord Field office if you suspect an algal bloom. 989-731-4920.

This information was gathered from the District Health Department.



For the thirtieth year, a volunteer lake monitor has collected key water quality indicators on Black Lake. Bob Williams has been volunteering on Black Lake since 2006. This past year, 2019, was special because Tip of the Mitt collected extra parameters in our regular three-year rotations. This important collections of data allows us to not only understand the lake's current conditions, but to also identify any deviations from long-term trends.

The following is a brief recap of what Williams and the Watershed Council collected in 2019.

### SECCHI DISK

The secchi disk is a weighted black and white disk used to measure clarity by lowering it into the water and recording the depth at which it is no longer visible. The average Secchi disk reading in 2019 was 13.62 feet. Overtime, Black Lake Secchi disk readings are trending slightly deeper, meaning there are decreasing levels of nutrients and sediments in the water. This is often a sign of high water quality

### CHLOROPHYLL-a

Chlorophyll-a is a pigment found in all green plants, including algae. Higher chlorophyll-a concentrations indicate greater phytoplankton densities, which reduce water clarity. The results of 2019 chlorophyll-a sampling were 0.19 ug/L, down from a high of 3.02 ug/L in 2016.

### TOTAL NITROGEN AND PHOSPHORUS

Phosphorus and nitrogen are two important nutrients for plants and algal growth. However, too much of either can have a negative impact on Black Lake water quality. Both nutrients are found in fertilizers and can leach from failing septic systems or surface runoff after rainfall. Most lakes in our area are phosphorus limited, meaning the biological productivity (i.e. - algal growth) is limited by the amount of phosphorus available. Minimizing external phosphorus inputs to Black Lake from septic systems and fertilizer is vital to managing nuisance algal blooms and maintaining high water quality. Phosphorus in 2019 was about the same as 2016, but

nitrogen increased about 60%. This increase may coincide with the algae bloom on July 3, 2019. The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) tested the algae for microcystin, a toxin that certain types of blue-green algae can produce. Results showed no algal toxins were present from sampling that occurred from July 3 through July 10.

### SUMMARY

Overall, the water quality of Black Lake remains high, but is not without threats. Harmful algal blooms are an emerging issue the EGLE is taking seriously. If you suspect a harmful bloom, contact the Gaylord Field office at 989-731-4920 or email

[algae bloom@michigan.gov](mailto:algae bloom@michigan.gov).

If you have questions, comments or concerns about the above information, please do not hesitate to contact Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council at 231-347-1181 or email at

[Info@watershedcouncil.org](mailto:Info@watershedcouncil.org).

## KEITH CHELI

REGINAL FIELD PLANNER  
MDNR PARKS AND RECREATION DIVISION

Our tentative schedule for environmental clean up at the Marina project site is as follows:

- Preliminary Remedial Design—mid March 2020
- Final Design—Mid April 2020
- Bid Advertisement—end April 2020
- Bid Award—Mid May 2020
- Contracted Site Clean Up—Mid May to end of June

As noted, we hope to keep the

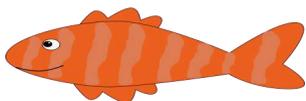
boating access site open to the public during the work effort, but will make that determination as part of the planning and design process. We have received internal approval to remove the structures on site and are evaluating our funding and internal DNR staff resources for removal of the open pole building this winter or early spring. Updates will be provided as our efforts continue to unfold.



The Onaway SP Pavilion is currently being rebid with project proposals due February 19. Edits were made to help reduce the potential proposal cost for construction while retaining the core elements and design improvements. The Friends Group of the Onaway State Park have been an instrumental force of support for this endeavor and should be recognized for their tireless efforts to see this project to fruition.



**IF YOU NEED TO STABILIZE YOUR SHORELINE, REMEMBER THAT YOU SHOULD BE DOING IT IN A MANNER TO PRESERVE THE VERY THINGS THAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THE LAKEFRONT IN THE FIRST PLACE, KEEPING IN MIND THE HEALTH OF BLACK LAKE.**



### Controlling Swimmers' Itch

Cindy Trepanier

The traditional method of controlling swimmer's itch has been to attempt to kill the host snails with copper sulfate. A permit from MDEQ in Lansing is required prior to any aquatic use. Copper sulfate is a nonspecific poison that is toxic, not only to snails, but also many non-target aquatic plants and animals. Copper accumulates in lake sediments and can bioaccumulate in the living tissues of aquatic animals. Long term heavy use can pose a significant threat to the health of aquatic environments. It often doesn't kill enough of the snails to eliminate swimmer's itch.

An interesting study done by Freshwater Solutions, LLC biologists in 2017 showed there was no decrease in risk of contracting swimmer's itch after a copper sulfate treatment.

The Black Lake Association and The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council does not endorse or encourage the use of copper sulfate to prevent or control swimmer's itch.

## HIGH WATER LEVELS AND SHORLINE EROSION

JENNIFER MC KAY—TIP OF THE MITT WATERSHED COUNCIL

Recent news across the Great Lakes States has been about high water levels. Water levels on each of the Great Lakes started 2020 higher than they started in 2019. In addition, Lakes Michigan and Huron could potentially reach record high levels this year. While this has captured the attention of the media and all levels of government, lakes of all types, including inland lakes, are experiencing some degree of water level fluctuation in response to precipitation cycles.

While usually not as drastic as the Great Lakes, the potential range of fluctuation on inland lakes involves factors including lake types, water sources and how lake levels are manipulated. Natural lakes experience fluctuations and the degree to which they respond to local and regional precipitation events generally is related to the amount of surface water runoff the lake receives from its watershed. In addition, many natural lakes have been equipped with legally established level control structures for the purpose of seasonally manipulating water levels. Both Alverno Dam and Smith Rapids act as water level controls for Black Lake, to maintain lake levels that were set

by court order in 1965.

For many years, there have been concerns raised by residents along Black Lake and Black River regarding the levels of the lake and whether they should be lowered to avoid property damage. High waters cause erosion, flooding and can damage structures along the shoreline. So what are shoreline homeowners to do when water levels are high? If your shoreline is experiencing ongoing and accelerated erosion due to high water and is in need of stabilization, you can apply for a permit for a shoreline stabilization project from the State of Michigan. Shoreline projection projects, including riprap, revetments and bioengineered shore protection, require permits from the Michigan Dept. of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE)

When considering shoreline projects, it is important to consider the health of Black Lake and the potential impacts on neighboring property. For example, seawalls and sheet piling do not allow for absorption of the energy that waves bring in. As waves hit the seawall all the energy from the waves does not disappear. This energy is directed downwards and sideways. The energy that is directed down erodes the lake bottom. Scouring of the lake bottom increases with lake size and

wave height, causing loss of habitat. In addition, seawalls cause wave flanking in which the wave energy is also deflected sideways to neighboring property. This causes erosion on the neighbor's property where there might not have been any erosion. You may contact the Watershed council for guidance and recommendations with respect to developing plans for an appropriately designed bioengineered shoreline. It is also recommended that anyone considering a shoreline protection project contact EGLE prior to submitting a permit application. Shoreline property owners can request a pre-application meeting with EGLE Water Resources Division staff.

It is also important to remember that we cannot control Mother Nature and force Black Lake to behave in a manner that is acceptable to our current uses or lifestyles. We can only control how we deal with the effects. By trying to manipulate the Lake to accommodate our needs, we are often merely creating more problems. It is best to sit back and enjoy the very things that attracted you to lakefront living in the first place. Clean water, abundant wildlife, good fishing and access to recreation.

## SWIMMER'S ITCH CONFERENCE

CINDY TREPANIER

Cindy Trepanier and Gail Smith attended the 2019 Michigan Swimmer's Itch Partnership Conference on Nov. 10, 2019 at Kirkland Community College in Grayling. While there, they heard Barb Avers, an EGLE Waterfowl and Wetland Specialist present on the permitting and removal of Mergansers, Geese and Mute Swans, the only animals al-

lowed to be removed at this time.

Dr. Curtis Blankenspoor, Swimmer's Itch Solutions spoke next. He put tracking devices on six birds to see how far they travel and what their habits are. Two died from relocation, one stopped moving in Cheboygan, but hasn't been retrieved yet, and one device stopped transmitting. He has done a

survey of Black Lake.

The Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council then announced that Dr. Ronald Remink has made some new discoveries concerning Swimmers Itch and will be holding a symposium, about the new Schistosoma parasite being shed from Helisoma snails and implications this may have on control.

## ARE THERE LAMPREYS IN BLACK LAKE?

ROGER BERGSTEDT—989-733-8337



### Special thanks to all of our hard working Black Lake Beach Reps.

- GAIL SMITH
- MARLENE GEORGE
- GARY SHEPHERD
- RANDY LEWIS
- ARLENE HARMAN
- RICK PETERS
- SHEILA KRAYCS
- SUE MADDEN
- CONNIE NADJARIAN
- RON DULAK
- DANA BROPHY
- MISSY BEARDSLEY
- KAY HOEFFLIN
- LYNNE HENZLER
- SUE ROBERTS
- EUGENE OSANTOWSKI
- JILL LEWIS
- ROBERT WALKER
- SONNY SMITH
- PATTI ARCHAMBO
- CHARLENE SWIHART
- INGRID/NEIL SENDELBACK
- DEBORAH REDDER
- JULIE JOHNSON
- FLORENCE ROBERTS
- SANDY SCHNAU
- CASSIE COBB
- SARAH SOULE
- PAM SELVIG
- LINDA VAN SICKLE
- JOCELYN BERGSTEDT
- LYNDA O'NEIL

Questions about lampreys and whether they are found on Black Lake arise every year and we are lucky to have an authority right here on Black Lake to answer our questions.



Two native species are found in the Black River system: the silver lamprey and the American brook lamprey. Of those, only the silver lamprey has a parasitic phase and feeds on fish. Although it has a parasitic phase, the silver lamprey only reaches a foot in length at most and does not appear to cause much fish mortality. If you do much fishing in Black Lake, you will occasionally find a lamprey attached to a fish as you land it. That lamprey will almost certainly be a silver lamprey.

I know of no instances of a sea lamprey being found above the Alverno dam. The Alverno dam was constructed

in 1903, long before the lampreys were detected in Lake Huron (1932). However, the lock in Cheboygan, and possibly more porous earlier versions of the dam there, did allow sea lamprey into the Cheboygan River and ultimately into Mullett and Burt Lakes and their tributaries, which require periodic treatment with lampricide. A recent telemetry study conducted at the lock and dam in Cheboygan by Hammond Bay Biological Station suggested that movement upstream is either rare or not taking place. Follow-up studies showed that reproduction in Burt and Mullett tributaries is from a small landlocked population.

If a sea lamprey were found in Black Lake, that would be a very important observation and should be reported. The sea lamprey and the silver lamprey appear somewhat similar, but can be easily distinguished by two key features.

- The sea lamprey has two distinct and separate dorsal fins, while the silver lamprey has one continuous fin.
- The oral discs also have an obvious difference. Just below the tongue in the center is a wide crescent-shaped tooth. On the sea lamprey, that tooth is wide with multiple cusps; on the silver lamprey, it is much narrower with no obvious cusps.

If you collect a lamprey that you believe is a sea lamprey, please keep and freeze it. Call Roger on the lake at 989-733-8337 or Nick Johnson at the Hammond Bay Biological Station at 989-734-4768.

This complete article, including pictures and maps can be found on our website at:

**Www.**  
[blacklakeassociation.com](http://blacklakeassociation.com)

## BLACK LAKE INVASIVE INVENTORY 2019 HURON PINES

In response to the growing threat of invasive species outbreaks across Michigan and due to the vigilance of the Black Lake Association, the BLA and Huron Pines partnered together to conduct a third year invasive species survey of Black Lake. Unfortunately, due to the weather delays and complications with watercraft equipment, Huron Pines was unable to conduct the inventory to the desired extent in 2019, however they will be conducting another survey in 2020.

### RESULTS

Overall there was not a significant

change from 2018 to 2019. The main invasive species of concern for Black Lake and the surrounding area include: Phragmites australis, Eurasian watermilfoil, European frog-bit and purple loosestrife. Invasive species identified in Black Lake during the survey include purple loosestrife, honeysuckle and reed canary-grass.

In some areas of the lake there does appear to be an increase in the number of purple loosestrife infestations. The other species to note is invasive phragmites.

**All phragmites infestations present on the lake in 2019 have been determined to be the native species, NOT the invasive species.**

Due to difficulties encountered in 2019, the inventory in 2020 will be conducted earlier in the season and it will be more in-depth than in previous years. If no significant changes are recorded in the 2020 inventory, Huron Pines is proposing conducting the inventory every other year, every three years, whichever the two partners decide will be the best course.



TO JOIN THE BLA SEND \$25.00 TO :  
BLACK LAKE ASSOCIATION  
P.O. BOX 302  
ONAWAY, MICHIGAN 49765

**OR GO TO OUR WEBSITE:  
BLACKLAKEASSOCIATION.COM**

## MEETING DATES



☆ All meetings are held on the second Monday of the month, at Grant Township Hall at 7:00 PM.

**May 11th, 2020**

General meeting and nominations of directors.

**June 8th, 2020**

Potluck 6:00—bring a dish to pass and your own place settings.

General Meeting—Election of Directors.

Speaker—Cameron Cavitt  
Black Lake Water Level Control

**July 13th, 2020**

General Meeting

Speaker—Bill Fink

Watercraft safety and Etiquette on Black Lake

**August 10th, 2020**

General Meeting

Speaker—Roger Bergstedt

Is it a Sea or Native Lamprey

**September 14th, 2020**

General Meeting

Speaker—Tim Cwalinski EGLE

Black Lake Fishery

**October 12th, 2020**

General Meeting



Our mugs are back! \$10.00 each. Call Connie Nadjarian at 248-561-7174 or Cindy Trepanier at 989-370-7153 if interested.



## Black lake Association Banquet

Presents



BLACK LAKE GOLF CLUB, 2800 MAXON ROAD, ONAWAY, MICHIGAN 49765

SATURDAY, JULY 18, 2020

5:30 to 6:30 pm Appetizers and Music - 6:30 pm Dinner and Dessert

\$30.00 per person

Appetizers, Chicken, Fish and Meat

Vegetable, Potato and Dessert

Open bar



Please Reserve \_\_\_\_\_ dinners for July 18, 2020. I have enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return payment along with this for m before July 12, 2020.

Mail to: The Black Lake Association, P.O. Box 302, Onaway, MI 49765

Questions? Please call Connie Nadjarian at 248-561-7174

## WEED COMMITTEE

BOYD SMITH 734-637-6589

The Black Lake Association this past year, received several calls in regard to weeds in our lake. I was appointed to investigate. I started with looking into the Michigan Riparian magazine. I found two companies that addressed our problem, Michigan Lake Front Solutions and Savin Lake Services. Savin Lake sent me a few quotes on past lakes that used their services. The following is a list of a few lakes they worked on.

- Walled Lake - \$725,000  
Project Duration 2011-21
- Fife Lake—\$575,000  
Project Duration 2006-21
- Sage Lake—\$1,533,750

Project Duration 2006-22  
Just a side note, our lake is much larger than any of these lakes. After reviewing the above quotes, I still wanted an expert on weed control to come and survey our lake. I contacted Steve Zulinski of Michigan Lake Solutions and set up an appointment for August 15, 2019, to take a trip around the lake on my pontoon boat. I invited anyone on the lake that had concerns.

Once he arrived, on the 15th, he, along with my lovely wife, Linda and I got on our boat and took a ride around the lake. He had brought with him an aerial view of the lake, showing where the weeds

were located. The main concentration of weeds are located on the North West corner of the lake. After spending a few hours on the lake, he concluded that Black Lake does not have a weed problem and that those on the North West side might want to band together and purchase some products that would help eradicate the weeds in their particular areas. He would help with the purchase of these products. Again, I want to mention that he felt that Black Lake DOES NOT have a weed problem other than a few pockets on the North West side of the lake. Anyone who would like to address these concerns can call Guy Savin at 989-728-2200.