



Spring 2010

News & Views from the Watershed

Phragmites Control Efforts Begun

Larry Hauser

The Leelanau Conservation District has applied for a National Fish and Wildlife Federation (NFWF) “Five Star” grant such as helped fund eradication efforts in the Grand Traverse Bay last summer. A grant of \$39,430 is requested: matching contributions in cash and kind totaling \$64,400 have been pledged by the partnering organizations:

- the [Leelanau Conservation District](#)
- the [Lake Leelanau Lake Association](#)
- the [Leelanau County Board of Commissioners](#)
- the [Leelanau Conservancy](#)
- [Wildlife and Wetlands Solutions LLC](#)

Lake Association pledges are all “in kind” and include the following:

- coordination of treatment permissions
- landowner education
- invasive phragmites surveys
- use of boats for survey and treatment activities

The awards will be announced May 7. Vickie Smith of Wildlife and Wetlands Solutions, who helped Buzz Long (pictured below) of the Leelanau Conservation District prepare the grant application, says “I don't have any idea what our chances are of actually getting it, we'll just have to wait and see.”

An informational meeting for Lake Leelanau shoreline landowners and other interested parties will be scheduled for early May, soon after the grant announcement. The grant application says, “Phragmites has been present in Michigan for over two decades, but has only invaded Leelanau County in the last five years, making it easier to control. With annual follow-up, control can be attained.”



Phragmites in winter: stand on West Grand Traverse Bay, south of Suttons Bay

If the grant is approved: we are looking at the following time line:

- March-April 2010: Shoreline Survey. Over 20 acres have already been identified on the south end of the south lake, and other stands are known to exist in and near the Narrows.
- Early May: Informational Meeting
- May-June: permit application process
- July: second informational meeting
- Late July-September: herbicide treatments start. Herbicide treatment can reduce occurrences of phragmites by up to 90% in the first year.
- October thru 2011: herbicide treatments end. Restoration (burning or mowing to remove large amounts of biomass in above-ground stems) begins.

The proposed grant period is 07/01/2010 thru 12/31/2011.

If the grant is not approved, the Lake Association and other partnering agencies plan to move forward with educational efforts and shoreline surveys. In that event, however, herbicide application and restoration activities would have to be otherwise funded.

If you suspect phragmites on your property, consult the Leelanau Conservation District (256-9783) for positive identification, and for advice on control measures available to you.

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Image Credits

ordered by order on page, as it reads

p.1: L.Hauser | L.Hauser || p.2: Jeanne Coulter | L.Hauser

p.3: L.Hauser | Leland Township Planning Commission

p.4: Jim & Beck Stacy | L.Hauser

p.6: L.Hauser | L.Hauser || p.7 Mary Taylor

Acknowledgements

Abbie Panettiere (p.5) nee Abbott, currently of Catharpin Virginia, summered, as a child, in East Leland, on "Professor's Bay" (at the foot of Horn Road). Thanks to Vickie Smith for her help on the p.1 story. Thanks to John Fitzpatrick, Pete Taylor, Gil Bogley, Susan Och, and others, for their input & help on the Narrows Overlay story (p.6). Mistakes remaining are entirely my bad. (LH)

Help Wanted

The Lake Leelanau Lake Association is interested in finding a person who has experience in trapping waterfowl. Since our contractor for trapping mergansers is no longer available we are seeking alternative help. Email leelanaukassn@aol.com with a resume and your contact information.

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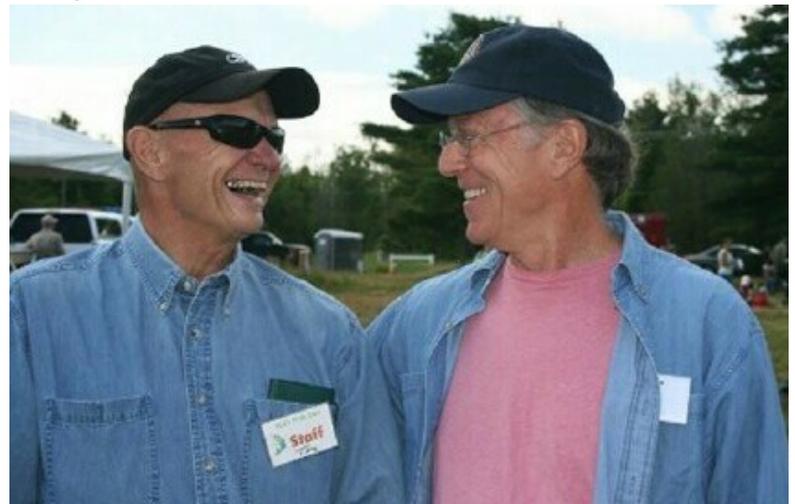
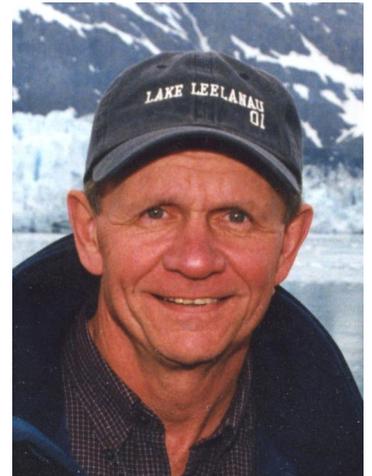
Tribute to Tom Coulter

by Hugh Farber

As many of you already know, Tom passed away in early January after a long and heroic battle with a non-curable illness.

Tom volunteered several years ago to be the treasurer of the Lake Leelanau Lake Association and served in that capacity right up to his death. He did a fantastic job of making the financial reports understandable to all – even those who needed a lucid report in lay person language. His performance was truly awesome!

Those of you that met Tom saw a smallish man with a huge smile and a heart to match it. He left big shoes to fill, and will really be missed for his friendship and his service to this Association. He will not be forgotten by any of us privileged to know him as a friend and colleague.



Tom shares a laugh with LLLA President John Fitzpatrick at Kid's Fishing Day 2009



President's Forum: A Broad View of the Narrows

Adapted from the Forum Article in the
Leelanau Enterprise of January 21, 2010

Last week's "Enterprise" ran a story headlined "Narrows Overlay Plan Draws Criticism". The headline is true, but incomplete and possibly misleading. The story quoted comments made at a

Leland Township Board meeting on January 11. At the Leland Township Planning Commission meeting that preceded it on January 6, a more balanced picture was revealed. Since that meeting was not reported, this Forum piece may help provide a broader perspective.

There were voices that spoke *in favor* of the overlay district at the Planning Commission meeting. Two Board members of the Lake Leelanau Lake Association and one interested citizen offered their support to the Planning Commission (within the same 10 minute period allotted to overlay district opponents by the PC Chair).

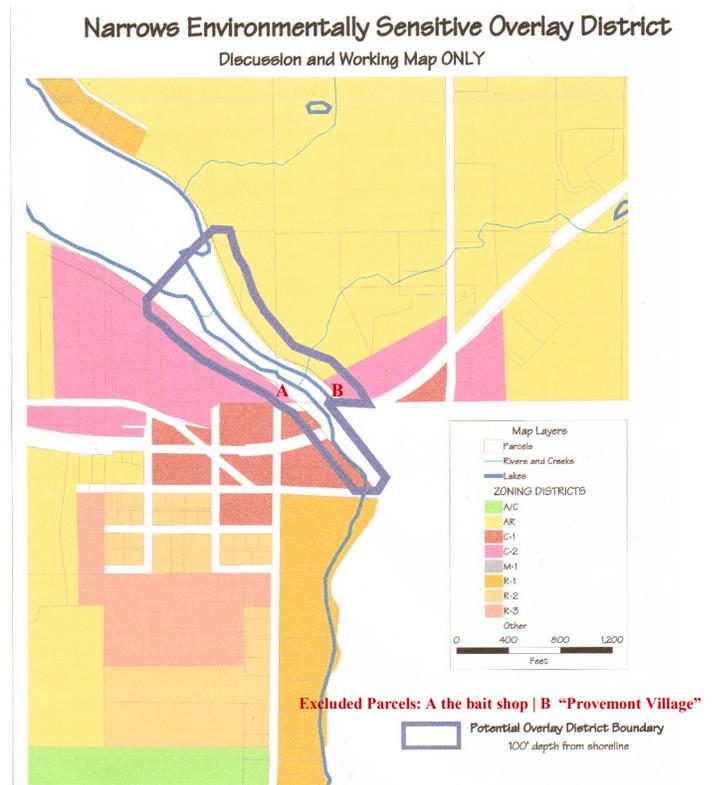
In comments on behalf of the Lake Association, I complimented the PC on the reasonable nature of their proposal. By limiting the size of the district to the most fragile and constricted segment of the Narrows, they avoided overreaching and left a substantial portion of commercially zoned land out of the district. The plan on which the PC reached consensus covered less than half the land originally considered.

Further, I noted that the special overlay district was in direct response to overwhelming community support. Evidence for this sentiment was cited in three recent surveys:

- 79% (of 614 responses) favored "preservation of open, undeveloped shorelines" in Leland Township's Master Plan survey of local taxpayers
- 97% (of 230 responses) favored "zoning in the Narrows to preserve...the natural area" in Lake Leelanau Lake Association's 2008 member survey
- 93% (of 56 responses) favored "efforts to protect the Narrows so that development will not degrade this sensitive area" in ELPOA's 2008 member survey
- Those citizens who opposed the district offered evidence of support in the form of a petition with 52 signatures. The surveys I cited represent 900 people, 760 of whom expressed support for the kind of solution that the overlay district represents.

The Narrows is a distinctive landmark and an environmentally sensitive focal point of the lake, our township, and county. In response to the mandate of its own Master Plan, our Planning Commission has produced a moderate approach that will assure both protection and sensible development of the Narrows. Any new zoning inevitably impacts the aspirations of some property owners. In this case, our Planning Commission has weighed the long-term economic, environmental, safety, and recreational benefits of our entire community and those of development interests, and has struck a reasonable balance. Our association commends them for their excellent work.

John Fitzpatrick, President
Lake Leelanau Lake Association



Parcel Sale Halts Provemont Village Plan

Larry Hauser

The Leelanau Enterprise (March 4: p.1) reports that John & Marge Bunek have sold the would-have-been site of the controversial Provemont Village marina-condominium development. The failure of Wayne Tyge's Narrows Development Company to attract investors or obtain bank loans needed to begin construction, and execute a long-standing purchase option, led the Buneks, recently, to pursue other buyers. Tyge blamed the depressed housing market on top of the money he spent fighting off the lawsuit, brought by the Lake Association, attempting to block the marina. "It's all over for us," John Bunek told the Enterprise, "except for an overlay zoning they are planning for the Narrows," signaling his determination to continue to fight against the Overlay District proposal.

continued on next page

Parcel Sale

continued from previous page

The buyer and new owner is M. Egan McGlynn, who, along with her husband Tim Cypher, owns the neighboring parcel. The Enterprise reports that, in the short term, McGlynn plans to restore the farmhouse on the former Bunek property for summer rentals. While her long term plans for the property are uncertain, McGlynn assured the Enterprise, that they do not include going forward with Provemont Village. Lake Association President John Fitzpatrick expressed confidence that whatever the new owners do in the long run will be “responsible” and “for the good of the community.”

2010 Legacy Celebration Venue Set

L.Hauser & www.jbstacy.com/about/birchcroft/



Jim and Becky Stacy have generously agreed to host the fourth annual Legacy Circle Celebration at historic Birchcroft Cottage on September 11, 2010. This invitation only event for Legacy Circle members features beer & wine & lite bites – and good company & conversation – at yet another historic Lake Leelanau location (after Wheeler's Cottage on Warden Point, Fountain Point, and Stonehedge). Watch for coming announcements.

Birchcroft, located on 3 acres of wooded land on the east shore of North Lake Leelanau, across the lake from Leland, was built in 1902 by Chicago physics professor Charles Leinbarger to entertain family, friends, and faculty. Leinbarger held many patents, most notably for the invention of the hydrometer.

The "arts and crafts" movement of those times is evidenced by the many handcrafted features such as the 98 leaded glass windows, extensive wrought iron details, hand-hewn beams, and the beautiful split-stone front porch and fireplace. The mission style architecture and setting gives you the feeling of a bygone era.

In 1979 Jim and Becky Stacy moved here from Colorado to restore this big, beautiful cottage. Today, they manage it as a vacation rental for Jim's family. It has become a twenty five year tradition for many families who rent it during the summer months. Occasionally there is a week open for people who are interested.

Communications Communique

new at www.lakeleelanau.org

Videos

- from Rob Karner (right)
- *Lake Friendly Lawn Care*
- *Swimmers Itch*
- *Water Quality Self Monitoring*



Phragmites: Lessons from Beaver Island

Leelanau in Winter: slide show from the Conservancy, with musical accompaniment

Membership Memo

Total Members = 360

Basic = 245

Legacy = 115

Kayaker 95 | Runabout 13 | Cruiser 7

Goals for Lake Leelanau over Next 5-10 Years

approved by LLLA Board January 12, 2010

- Continue with water quality and biological sampling of Lake Leelanau and its tributary streams.
- Support and encourage county-wide septic system inspections at time of sale of homes and systems built before 1970.
- Continue swimmers itch program to reduce impact on humans, and determine what snails and birds may be causing swimmers itch on South Lake Leelanau.
- Conduct aquatic plant sampling to determine potential for invasive species (phragmites, Eurasian milfoil and curly pondweed), or leakage of septic systems (cladophora surveys). Conduct zebra and quagga mussel sampling to determine impact on lake water quality and potential for microcystine problems.
- Educate members and citizens on Lake Leelanau water quality issues via newsletters, publications, seminars, website, sponsoring events, and recruiting volunteers.
- Wetlands – Monitor applications via MDEQ. Review and respond as is appropriate.
- Conduct E. coli testing at public beaches in north and south Lake Leelanau.
- Encourage township governments to adopt uniform zoning regulations applying to riparian properties.
- Apply for a grant to fund part-time consultant to coordinate watershed plan efforts.

Chemicals

by Abbie Panettiere with Vincent Panettiere
originally written for *The Turnip*

When we were children, we spent our summers in northern Michigan by a fresh-water lake, Lake Leelanau. One of our favorite activities when we were very young was wading, or when we learned how, swimming in the sparkling water, enjoying the minnows that swam around our feet and finding fossil stones or other precious articles in the shallow water near the shore. Unfortunately, some time in the early 20th century, the lake became infested with trematode parasites which produced "Swimmer's Itch," more technically known as cercarial dermatitis or Schistosome cercarial dermatitis.

The details of these parasites' life cycles are rather gross, (unless you love parasitic invertebrates). Back then, we, and even our parents, were, thankfully, ignorant of them. To cover the ground as quickly as possible, the parasites start out in the stomach lining of various water fowl – in our lake, the ducks we as children enjoyed watching. As they develop, they find a temporary home in snails, then become free-swimming larva called "cercaria," and it's at this stage that they cause such misery to human swimmers and waders. Cercaria only live for a day or so and occupy the upper few inches of water. Being rather limited in their ability to choose their proper host (the duck), they will infest anyone swimming or wading in the infested waters, particularly the shallow waters near the shore. Having found an imperfect host (humans), they burrow under the skin, lay their eggs, are detected by our body's immune system, attacked and killed, and it is the allergic reaction which produces an intense, painful and maddening itch.

The cure for this problem was to spread copper sulfate on the water so that it would sink down to the bottom and kill the snails. We were not allowed to swim on the day the State agents came by to do their work. I can remember standing on the shore and watching two men in a small rowboat, one steering by means of an outboard motor and the other pouring a powder out the back which when it entered the water made a beautiful turquoise blue display that would float for a short time on the surface before sinking down to destroy the snails. This cure was only temporary since the ducks came back and the snails who had not been touched by the copper sulfate survived, so the chemical had to be applied several times a summer.

It occurred to me to wonder what copper sulfate, since it killed the snails, might do to any other animal or plant in the lake and, in looking it up now, I find quite a bit of information. Copper sulfate is a naturally-occurring inorganic salt, and copper, in trace amounts, is an important part of animal and plant nutrition. Besides killing snails, it's used as a fungicide, an algicide and a herbicide in farming, and also in municipal water treatment systems. However, it is a strong irritant and humans generally receive a toxic dose by getting it on their skin or in their eyes or by inhaling powders or dusts. Looking back now, I wonder if the man I watched spilling copper sulfate powder into the lake developed health issues. There are problems with chronic exposure, such as liver disease and anemia.

Copper sulfate is also very toxic to fish and to aquatic invertebrates and plants. It is highly soluble in water, persists indefinitely and does not volatilize off. As children, we jumped into the water happily between treatments but I wonder what copper sulfate may have done to the beautiful lake I swam in.

My interest in chemicals concerns gardening these days and particularly the use of compost in the garden to put around trees, in flower gardens and around the vegetables I grow every year. Presumably compost you buy, either bagged at a big box store or by the truckload from a local composting facility will be composed of harmless organic ingredients but it may seem safer, perhaps, to build a mulch pile and make your own compost. At least that way you know which ingredients are going into the pile. In reading several sources on making mulch piles, the method seems to be pretty much the same: green elements, brown elements, soil, water and hopefully a little manure to hasten the process along. In one source I found, however, the writer says that if you don't have manure, you should sprinkle commercial chemical fertilizer in its place.

Chemical fertilizers have a higher amount of chemicals providing nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, usually around 20 to 60 percent and give a quick "jolt" to the plants, whereas natural fertilizer usually only has a maximum amount of about 14 percent and is absorbed into the soil more slowly. If you use chemical fertilizer often, you may run the risk of upsetting the balance of the soil and destroying the nitrogen-fixing bacteria which are intended by nature to fix atmospheric nitrogen to supply growing plants with their needs.

There are other disadvantages: beside the NPK content there may be other unnecessary chemicals and inert filler which further upset the soil's balance. Chemical fertilizers may contain no carbon, further upsetting the nitrogen/carbon balance in the soil and if the balance of trace elements is disturbed by frequent use of chemical fertilizers, fungus and bacterial diseases may ensue. I have read, often enough, of farmland rendered unusable for growing plants, as having "dead soil" from the effects of the constant overuse of chemical fertilizer. The concern about chemical additives also applies to mulch. Bagged mulches are what they say they are: the ingredients are listed on the bag, and sometimes there is little to question. If the bag says "bark" and it looks like bark, it's probably bark.

Rubber mulch initially seemed a good idea, but on closer examination the negatives turned up. It doesn't nourish the soil. Also, the smell isn't right for a garden, particularly in hot weather and rubber mulch can get quite hot in hot weather. This certainly doesn't help in keeping the soil cool around the roots. In checking further, I read that, since it is heavier than water, rubber mulch will sink into the soil faster and further than other, organic mulches will. Water permeates readily through rubber mulch and, in time, microbes will break it down so that the ingredients in the rubber will leach into the earth. This leachate contains chemical additives to prevent bacterial decay in the tires and the chemicals which may be used to produce tires (cadmium, chromium, aluminum, copper, iron, manganese, molybdenum, selenium, sulfur, and zinc) are themselves toxic to plant life. Zinc may be present in very high levels and may accumulate in plant tissues in levels high enough to kill the plant.

I didn't mean this article to be a polemic on the evils of putting chemicals in the soil, though it certainly looks as if I've done just that. However, considering the amount of excess fertilizer that ends up in the waterways that feed into the Chesapeake Bay, and the damage that this seriously polluted water does to the bay's ecosystem, it would seem a kindly act, as a friend of the environment, to limit their use to the absolute minimum.

Narrows Overlay District Proposal Debated in Leland Township

by Larry Hauser



LLLA President John Fitzpatrick addresses the LTPC

The recently adopted Leland Township Master Plan states, as a Natural Resource Goal, to “utilize guidelines that encourage the protection and preservation of water quality and environmentally sensitive areas.” To this end the Plan approves Objectives and Action Steps, including the following:

- G) Protect water quality through waterfront usage and development standards in the zoning ordinance.
- H) Preserve the natural vegetation of shoreline areas and encourage planting of native trees and shrubs through greenbelt regulations.
- I) Identify and protect the Lake Leelanau Narrows as a sensitive environment.

To meet these objectives, the Narrows Overlay District plan, put forward by the Leland Township Planning Commission, (LTPC) proposes zoning restrictions on property in the Overlay District. Changes that would:

1. impose residential waterfront-setback requirements of 40 feet for commercial properties that otherwise would be subject to only a 25' setback;
2. require a 25' waterfront greenbelt buffer (allowing for a 3' access path) on all properties in the district;
3. limit the impermeable surface coverage within 100' of the waterfront to 55% of the area;
4. ban marinas altogether.



These proposals have raised opposition headed by John Bunek (pictured left) who claims more than 50 signatures for a petition he has circulated opposing establishment of this district. Bunek claims the Narrows is being unfairly targeted with restrictions that decrease property values and do not apply elsewhere on the lake.

While the Lake Association encourages all riparians to maintain greenbelt buffers and limit impermeable surface coverage, the ecologically fragile wet-lands of the Narrows are especially vulnerable to degradation from nutrient overloading and runoff-borne pollution. For good reason the Master Plan

singles out the Narrows as a “sensitive environment” in need of protection: the setback, impermeable surface, and buffer zone requirements in this proposal seem reasonable ways to address this concern.

From an environmental perspective, the fragile Narrows wetlands are singularly unsuitable for marina development; though, from an economic perspective – given their central location on the lake – they are apt to attract such development. Thus, the Narrows are in need of special protection from marina development: the marina that already exists at the Narrows Bait Shop plus what is already approved for “Provemont Village” are more than enough. Due to the preexisting marina at the bait shop, and preexisting approval for up 11 slips at the “Provemont Village” site, these two properties have been grandfathered out of the District. (See map p.3)

As for the argument that existing state and federal protections already suffice to protect the sensitive wetlands of the Narrows; so there's no need for the District: we have already seen these protections fail when the MDEQ approved a 22 slip marina for the “Provemont Village” project. The Township Planning Commission saw fit to halve this, permitting only 11 slips. Furthermore, the deepening state budget crisis has already forced merger of the DEQ & DNR into the DNRE (Department of Natural Resources & Environment). In light of this, it seems there is no prospect of better protection forthcoming from the state; and a strong likelihood of diminished protection.

As for the argument that, if another marina plan were brought forward, it would still be subject to review by the Planning Commission; so, no worry: however much protection the need for PC review affords the Narrows depends, both *on the ordinances in place* and on the composition of the commission charged to administer the ordinances. To rely entirely on the good environmental consciences of future commissioners to “protect the Lake Leelanau Narrows as a sensitive environment,” would simply ignore the objective stated in the master plan and do nothing to protect the Narrows.

As for the argument that the Overlay District addresses a non-problem or, at least, a problem there is no urgency to address in these economic climes (in which no one is apt to be bringing forward any new marina projects soon): times change. To depend on market forces alone “to protect the Lake Leelanau Narrows as a sensitive environment” is, again, not to pursue the objective stated in the master plan, but to abandon it.

The Overlay District is just one part of the complete overhaul of its zoning that Leland Township is currently undertaking. When the Planning Commission has completed work on all provisions there will be a public hearing. Finally, perhaps sometime this coming fall, surviving provisions will be subject, as revised, to approval by the Leland Township Board of Commissioners. If the Narrows Overlay District survives this process, and wins approval from the Township Board, it would then go into effect, as revised, as part of the new zoning ordinance .

Please complete and return the survey postcard enclosed.



photo credit: Mary Taylor

Goin' to an Ice Fishin' A-go-go

Pete Taylor

Pictured above is one of the many ice fishing groups on the lake this winter. There are far more fishermen on the lake due mostly to layoffs in the construction industry. The fishing has been, as usual, good some days, and slow on other days. Some nice walleyes have been taken on the north lake, and an 8 pound lake trout was also caught.

Lake Leelanau Watershed Plan Update

Wayne Swallow

The Lake Leelanau Lake Association (LLLA) has been working with the Leelanau Conservancy since last spring to update the Lake Leelanau Watershed Protection Plan (Plan). The Plan update is required to meet new EPA requirements for watershed management plans. The Plan will be submitted to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (MDNRE), in the near future for approval. Once approved, area nonprofit organizations (including LLLA) can apply for grants to fund projects under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act. Examples of projects included in the plan include watershed and wetland education and protection, swimmers itch control, fish and wildlife habitat enhancements, road stream crossing improvements, stormwater runoff control, biological and chemical monitoring of the lake and streams, invasive species control, wastewater management, development, and shoreline protection.

Public input was gathered to learn how residents and visitors use the lake, what they value about the lake and surrounding watershed, and what things they believe threaten this valuable resource. The plan and its project task list were developed by environmental professionals working with guidance from EPA along with the public input. The Leelanau Conservancy has received over \$1.1 million from Section 319 program to purchase conservation easements that protect wetland and riparian properties in the Lake Leelanau watershed since 2003. LLLA is hopeful that it will obtain grants to support improvements and preserve the watershed and Lake Leelanau resources that are desired by our members.

LLLA Swimmers Itch Update

Wayne Swallow

Last year the Lake Leelanau Lake Association (LLLA) restarted its program to control swimmers itch which was conducted for a couple years in North Lake back in the early 1990's. Our contract with Swimmer's Itch Control (SICon) out of Holland to capture and relocate mergansers resulted in the relocation of four broods to Lake Michigan. Our swimmers itch survey resulted in 48 responses, 40 of which reported instances of swimmers itch (29 from North Lake, and 11 from South Lake). Members reported 222 cases of the itch. Multiplying the 222 cases by the days it lasted per individual totaled approximately 1517 days. Adding to the unpleasantness of the itch these individuals reported that they avoided swimming in Lake Leelanau an additional 1330 days. Details of the survey along with comments can be found in our fall 2009 newsletter linked from our website at www.lakeleelanau.org.

LLLA mentioned last year that SICon was exiting its business, so our 2010 and future efforts would likely be altered out of necessity. Both Glen Lake Association (GLA) and LLLA decided not to pursue the expensive alternative of buying SICon's equipment and methods. Glen Lake Association has applied for a US Fish and Wildlife (USFW) permit to continue the trap and relocation efforts with a local contractor. GLA has not yet received a permit because of disagreement between the USFW and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (MDNRE). LLLA has its permit application ready to submit to the USFW when the GLA finally gets a permit. However, we are uncertain if the trap and relocate activities will occur in 2010. We know that swimmers itch is a real problem for many members. If you would like periodic updates on swimmers itch in between our newsletters simply go to www.lakeleelanau.org. Click on the link "Get on our Email list", type "swimmers itch" in the subject line and send. We will keep you updated on status of our efforts as we make progress.



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LLLA, PO Box 123, Leland, MI 49654

Or use the online payment option available at our website.

www.lakeleelanau.org

BASIC MEMBERSHIP

\$45

LEGACY MEMBERSHIPS: Basic included. Watch for special events in 2009 for Legacy Members

\$500 Cruisers

\$250 Runabouts

\$100 Kayakers

DONATIONS _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Will you donate your time?

Yes!! I'm here year 'round

Yes!! I'm here summer only

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Fish Committee

Township Representative

Legacy Events

Communications Committee

Water Quality Committee

Membership

Safety/Boating Committee