



THE HEALTH OF
HIGGINS LAKE

PROTECTING OUR WATERS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

COMMITTEE REFLECTIONS

MARCH/APRIL 2026

EXPLORING EVERY IMPACT

EMPOWERING EVERY VOICE

ENSURING A HEALTHIER HIGGINS LAKE



STEERING COMMITTEE

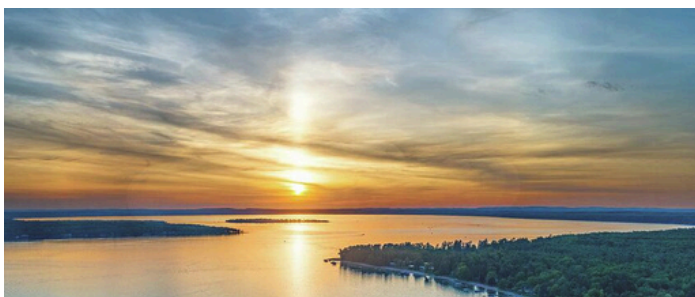
- Septic Ordinance Draft was revised, approved, and forwarded to the Gerrish Township Board. It is expected to move next to the Planning Commission.
- Focus continues on funding opportunities, grant planning, and updating the Watershed Management Plan.
- Legislative outreach letters are being developed to improve communication with state and federal legislators.
- Work is underway to build partnerships with northern Michigan groups addressing similar lake and stream concerns.
- Planning has begun for a June annual report highlighting key accomplishments, setbacks, and future goals.

Health of Higgins Lake



SCIENCE

- Members continue active work within all science subcommittees.
- A new major project under review is the development of a mathematical model for Higgins Lake.
- Ryan McClure, a Roscommon Schools graduate and professional Data Scientist/Ecosystem Modeler, joined the committee and presented the modeling concept.
- The proposal was well received, and a science subcommittee is developing a formal scope of work for Steering Committee review.



SEPTIC

- The Septic Ordinance Draft was forwarded to the Gerrish Township Board and is expected to move to the Planning Commission.
- Septic map data collection continues using assessor records, CMDHD FETCH data, and EGLE Wellogic records.
- Twenty-two weighted categories are now used to rate each parcel's potential environmental risk.
- Development of the Septic "Heat Map" continues, identifying higher-risk areas and helping guide future planning.
- A homeowner process is being developed to help residents locate their septic rating, understand compliance requirements, and prepare for the future ordinance.

ROAD ENDS

- No formal report this period.
- Next meeting is April 16.

*ensuring a healthier
Higgins Lake*



IT/FUNDRAISING

- Donate button for HOH-Lake.org is in progress.
- Grant opportunities and partnership funding continue to be explored.
- A township funding fact sheet is being developed.
- Continued support of Nextcloud and routine IT maintenance.
- Septic spreadsheets were converted to a SQL database for stronger analysis.
- Ongoing support for the Septic Information Map and website donation feature.

COMMUNICATIONS

- February's Ripple Effect highlighted the Science Committee. March included two Ripple Effect emails focused on invasive species, with April continuing the topic and emphasizing "What Can You Do?"
- Email distribution has grown to approximately 285 community members plus 50 committee members.
- Facebook responses continue using factual messaging, while Instagram and YouTube options are being explored.
- Website traffic averages about 300 visitors per day, with plans to work with a website professional this spring.
- Summer outreach includes attending local association meetings, a one-day HOHL Expo during the Fire Department Open House, HOHL T-shirt sales, and a one-year update press release.