



THE HEALTH OF
HIGGINS LAKE

PROTECTING OUR WATERS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

COMMITTEE REFLECTIONS

JULY 2026

EXPLORING EVERY IMPACT

EMPOWERING EVERY VOICE

ENSURING A HEALTHIER HIGGINS LAKE



STEERING

- Celebrate Higgins Lake & Beyond" will be held Saturday, August 8, from 11 AM to 3 PM. Information tables will feature HOHL subcommittees, the DNR, the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly, and others, along with presentations, children's activities, and refreshments.
- The committee supported the Septic Committee in seeking funding for the Sovereign Park Demonstration Map project (see below).
- A new subcommittee is forming to address fertilizers, moving that work out of the Road Ends Committee. Volunteers are sought for that subcommittee.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Email management is moving to Constant Contact, so that upcoming issues will look different.
- Instagram is up and running, and a YouTube channel has launched to collect short videos from HOHL members and community members about the lake.
- A geofencing public-education initiative will be tested in July and August to share location-based messages with lake visitors and residents – Clean/Drain/Dry reminders, boating and AIS-prevention tips, restroom locations, and links to educational videos and webpages.
- HOHL T-shirts will be sold on the website and at the August 8 celebration.

ROAD ENDS

- The committee is close to completing a comprehensive spreadsheet on areas of runoff.
- HLU has agreed to supply collection materials and testing for runoff at the 9 Gerrish problem areas.
- The committee met with the Roscommon County Road Commission and is in discussions to have the RCRC repair the six high-producing road ends by fall at no cost to HOHL.



FUNDING

- The committee met with Gerrish Township Treasurer Jim Anderson to discuss how it might help with budget projections to assist with planning.
- The HOHL donate button is now functional on the Gerrish Township website..

SCIENCE

- Following discussions with senior DNR leadership, the North and South State Parks will begin limited inspections of arriving boats The West DNR launch remains unstaffed, with no inspections or education there this season. This is a significant first step despite limited implementation.
- Swimmer's itch has emerged as a priority for 2026 and is now part of the Nearshore Committee work plan.



Health of Higgins Lake



SEPTIC & GROUND WATER

- The Septic Ordinance Draft has been submitted to the Planning Commission, and the chair will attend meetings as needed to answer questions.
- The Sovereign Park Demonstration Map was presented to the Steering Committee on June 16. Using LiDAR technology along with Department of Agriculture and USGS data, the map will show ground surface, subterranean soil layers, well locations and depths, and septic system locations for a high-density area of the lake — providing current information to help plan for the septic ordinance.
- The committee supports the Higgins Lake Foundation's new "Be Well Wise" water well testing program for Gerrish and Lyon Township residents. Kits are available Saturdays at the Farmers Market or at the Foundation office in Roscommon.
- Updated data was received from the Assessor and CMDHD reflecting records filed with the Health Department as of June 1 for both Gerrish and Lyon Township, and is being added to the database.

INFO/TECHNOLOGY

- The committee processed the latest CMDHD data updates for the Higgins Lake Watershed Information Map and continued refining the data pipeline, database, and documentation.
- IT supported the HOH-lake.org website refresh and reviewed technical requirements for the geofencing project.