

# Bear Lake News

Newsletter from the Bear Lake—Lake Board

Produced by PLM Lake & Land Management Corp.

## Bear Lake Accomplishments 2023

1.



## BLLB Important Updates 2024

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### Get Added to the BLLB Contact List

Go out to [www.bllb.org](http://www.bllb.org) and click on the link to fill out a form to be added to the contact list.

Email one of the BLLB board members with your name, address, email(s), and text number(s) (if you want text updates for treatments only). (See [BLLB.org](http://BLLB.org) for contact information).

## Rapid Response on First Hydrilla Infestation Found in Michigan

The dreaded news we have feared for over a decade was met with reality in September when Hydrilla was positively identified by the Water Resource Division of EGLE in two small waterbodies in Berrien Springs, Michigan. Hydrilla, widespread in southern states, has been a top "Watch List" species in Michigan for decades.

PLM was contacted by EGLE, as part of their Rapid Response Plan for new exotic plants, to get these waterbodies treated as quickly as possible. PLM responded immediately with an herbicide treatment to systematically treat the infestation in hopes to prevent it from spreading regionally or state wide.

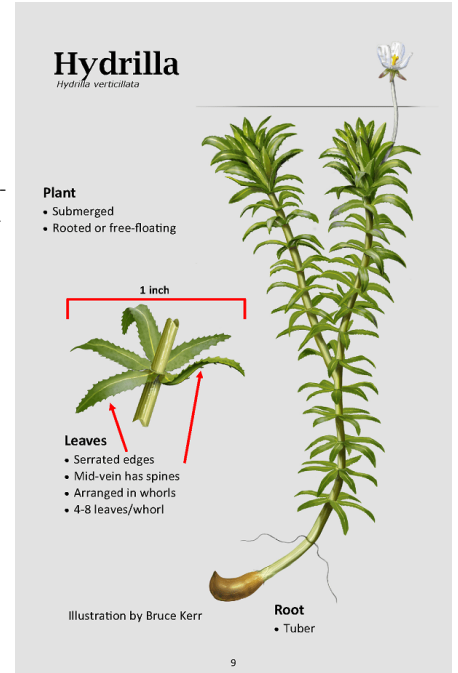
Hydrilla, a federally regulated plant, in which it is illegal to house and/or sell, has plagued southern US lakes for decades. It's ability to reproduce through fragmentation, stolons or rhizomes and tubers makes this plant extremely difficult to control. It quickly outcompetes native and most other nonnative plants (including Eurasian watermilfoil), forming a dense monoculture (single plant) and is considered one of the world's most invasive aquatic plants.

Since Hydrilla was found south of Michigan's border in 2006 in Lake Manitou, Indiana, it has been a top priority species in all PLM's surveys. PLM has been actively monitoring thousands of waterbodies annually in hopes that IF this plant was ever found, it could be contained to protect the rest of Michigan's waterways. PLM, in conjunction with EGLE, determined a proactive systemic control plan that was executed within days of its positive identification.

An early detection rapid response plan is vital to any management plan in order to protect it from new invaders that threaten our lakes. With Hydrilla positively identified in Michigan, it is important that everyone is on the lookout for this plant and know the key identifiers.

Identifying Markers: Long slender stems floating near the water surface. Pointed, bright green leaves about 5/8 inch long with small teeth on the edges. Leaves growing around the stem, generally in whorls of five, but they can range from four to eight. Tiny, floating white flowers visible in late summer to fall. Small, white to yellowish, potato-like tubers attached to the roots. Hydrilla looks very similar to Michigan's native species, Elodea as well as another nonnative invader, Brazilian elodea. A good way to tell them apart is that Hydrilla has a whorl of more than 3 leaves, has tiny serrated edges, and is the ONLY submerged plant to produce tubers.

*Information provided by MI-EGLE.*



## Lake Board Members

**Darrell Van Fossan:** Chairperson, Riparian Owner Representative, darrell.vanfossan.bllb@gmail.com

**Paul Pek:** Vice Chair, Laketon Township Representative, paul.pek.bllb@gmail.com

**Craig Howell:** Treasurer, North Muskegon Representative, craig.howell.bllb@gmail.com

**Brenda Moore:** Secretary, Water Resources Commissioner, moorebr@co.muskegon.mi.us

**Jessica Cook:** Muskegon County Commissioner cookje@muskegoncounty.net

## Board Financials

### Estimated 2024 Budget

Lake Management (PLM):

Lake Monitoring and Consulting (GVSU):

Lake Treatment (PLM):

Attorney : Other Items:

Fenner's Bayou Treatment -

Grant Match/GVSU Plan Feedback -

Total 2024 estimated expenses:

## Improved Resident Communications

- **BLLB.org:** The BLLB now has it's own website! This site has board information like meeting and treatment dates, board packets, meeting minutes, and in the future will be enhanced to include lake education.
- **BLLB Facebook Group:** Used in conjunction with website for events and notifications.
- **Email Updates:** Residents to sign up to receive automatic communications.
- **Treatment Notification:** Residents of the City of North Muskegon will be notified via the Nixle system currently used by NM for urgent notifications. All City and Laketon Township residents can opt-in to email or text notifications for treatment.
- **Treatment Maps:** Maps indicating what areas of the lake are/ were treated.

## Lake Issue Reporting Protocol

- If you notice any issues with the condition of our Lake-front, please contact one of the following BLLB members: Darrell Van Fossan, Paul Pek, or Craig Howell. (See BLLB.org for contact information).
- The preferred method is an email with a description of your issue, a photo of it, as well as your address.
- The BLLB has a new treatment protocol which will allow the authorization of treatment quickly after reported issues start coming in, avoiding delays in treatment.

## DNR Wake Boat Report

The DNR released its final report on the impacts of wake boats to our inland lakes and fisheries. Based on the water quality concerns (i.e. damage to shorelines, bottomlands, and fish habitat) found in their study, recommendations have been made for all boaters. Also, bipartisan legislation has been introduced that, if approved, will greatly change the way these types of boats are used in the state.

MDNR recommends the following:

- \* Boats operating in wake-surfing mode or wake-boarding mode are recommended to operate at least 500 feet from docks or the shoreline, regardless of water depth.
- \* Boats operating in wake-surfing or wake-boarding modes are recommended to operate in water at least 15 feet deep.

*Based on these recommendations, there are no appropriate areas to wake boat on Bear Lake.*

The full DNR report can be found at: [mymlsa.org](http://mymlsa.org)

Water skiing doesn't destroy pristine lakes, but...

# WAKESURFING? That's a whole new story!

**The bow comes up** and the stern goes down to increase the wake, so it's hard to see ahead.

**3 to 4 foot high wakes** are created so people can wakesurf, without a rope, like surfing in the ocean.

**Algae blooms** are fueled by nutrients freed from disturbed sediment. Some can kill fish and pets, and make people sick.

**Fishermen have been knocked over**, pontooners drenched, and small craft capsized by the massive wakes.

If fishermen, pleasure boaters, paddlers, and others can't enjoy our lakes, then tourism, property values and business income will plummet.

**Loon nests** are just inches above water in calm areas. Big wakes can destroy eggs.

**As the wake enters shallow water**, plants are damaged, sediment is churned, and fish eggs can be destroyed.

**When the big wake crashes** on shore it can cause erosion and damage docks and moored boats.

**Sediment** is stirred up and plants are damaged 20 feet deep by the powerful motor and deep downward angled propeller.

**Little fish** live among the plants. Fewer plants means fewer little fish for big game fish to eat.

**Loons**, otter and many fish can't see prey in murky water.

**Ballast tanks** don't drain completely and can bring invasives from other lakes.

**Invasive plants** spread easily in damaged areas.

**Spiny waterfleas** can upset the entire ecosystem, resulting in fewer game fish and murky water.

**Is the boating industry's 200 feet from shore rule enough?**

wake height 200' from surfboat's path 16"  
7"  
10"  
12"  
9"

**How do they make those huge wakes?**

- Add ballast water, up to 5000 pounds (600 gallons)
- Operate at speeds that bring the bow up and stern down
- Use wake enhancing fins
- The wake is 6 to 12 times more powerful than ski boat wakes!

**For More Information See: [LastWildernessAlliance.org](http://LastWildernessAlliance.org)**  
Report dangerous boating at DNR's anonymous 24/7 hotline: **1-800-TIP-WDNR**

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