



# LES CHENEAUX WATERSHED NEWS

...promoting the conservation, protection, restoration and sustainability of our water-based resources.

SPRING 2015

LES CHENEAUX WATERSHED COUNCIL

Volume 6 Number 1

## 2015 News and Plans



We now have at least 20" more water vs. 2012 when it was at the 3 1/2 ft mark on this gauge. According to the Army Corps, we will see at least ten more inches this season. Will the rise continue or begin to drop? Those of us who have witnessed the extreme high levels as well



as low levels understand there is little we can do to influence water level in the Great Lakes....but is that true? See details on our website for the LCWC and Restore Our Waters International (ROWI) advocacy position to bring Lakes Huron and Michigan to within their natural, historic range. Also see a video showing negative effects of long term low lake levels at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8o5bdbsF1mk>

### HIGHLIGHTED IN THIS ISSUE:

- ◆ **Our lake level** is up for the third consecutive season.
- ◆ **Milfoil** is less of a problem thanks, in part, to community members helping collect it.
- ◆ A vote on **Cedarville Harbor** upgrade is pending.
- ◆ Our **Website** is getting a makeover.
- ◆ **Frogfest** will be even better this season.
- ◆ **Government Island** trails are improved.
- ◆ **Invasive Cattails** are being addressed.
- ◆ **Leopold Benches** are sprouting everywhere.

Read on for details.

For more depth on the above topics visit our website or see our recent postings on Facebook.

*A sincere thank you to all who support our projects!*

**Extra consideration** of your financial support is appreciated. Our success with State and Federal grants has been disappointing this year and, at this time, our budget requires minimizing our field project efforts.

**[www.lescheneauxwatershed.org](http://www.lescheneauxwatershed.org)**

From your Facebook account type in:

Les Cheneaux Watershed Council

Phone: 906-484-3031

**Water Quality Update.** In addition to our waters remaining highly desirable for recreational use during 2014 we experienced fewer weed issues of both native and non-native types in most areas. Less weed growth was likely due, in part, to cooler overall water temperatures in 2014. Island-wide water temperatures were lower for the 2014 season by about five degrees (F) than those recorded for the 2012 season.



DEQ Director Dan Wyant and staff tour of weed beds last season.

Two consecutive years of higher lake level also changed the aquatic weed growth dynamic for invasive milfoil as well as our native weeds. Although Eurasian watermilfoil continues to grow, individual stem counts indicated that native plants appear to compete much better with the cooler water temperatures and increased water depth. Water sample analysis by the Univ of Michigan Biological Station at Douglas Lake and plankton community density data developed by Michigan Tech limnologists help us understand weed density and how algae communities affect our fishery food web.



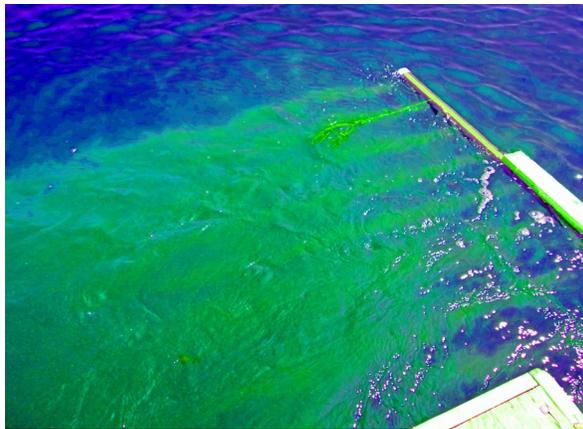
Good water quality = Good fishing

**Eurasian watermilfoil** has become just another aquatic weed the past two seasons. Regardless, we have been working vigorously to manage its spread using a bottom drag in channels, Cedarville Marine's mechanical harvester where appropriate and the native biological control fungus which gave 85% control of milfoil in tests conducted last summer. More tests of the biocontrol fungus are planned this summer. Fresh biocontrol fungus is produced by

a U.S. Dept of Agriculture laboratory in Peoria, IL. The Michigan DEQ is also interested in use of the native fungus for milfoil control and will be conducting two inland lake tests using our LCWC team as consultants. We have experienced two seasons of effective milfoil control with the fungus which is also reported to be effective against Hydrilla, another invasive aquatic weed, that is quickly moving northward from southern waters. Commercialization efforts are being pursued.



Left: Early attempts at Eurasian watermilfoil removal in Cedarville Bay in 2006. Tony Autore, Mike Davis and Charlie Denoyer. Clam rig provided by Cedarville Marine.



Application of biocontrol fungus from Chris Brumleve's pontoon boat.



Mark Clymer rating the biocontrol fungus destruction of LCI Eurasian watermilfoil

**Your beach!** Every waterfront property owner can help reduce the impact of Eurasian watermilfoil by keeping your beaches weed free. A regular beach maintenance program during the summer will help us all minimize the impact of milfoil and other aquatic weeds in our waterways thereby contributing to our island-wide weed management efforts.

Some ways you can help include:

- \* Regularly rake your beach and dispose of weeds that have washed up between rakings.
- \* Pulling invasive weeds and their root mass both on the beach and from the water around docks.
- \* Lay out a benthic tarp in the water to keep milfoil from growing.
  - These specialized tarps are easily deployed and recovered.
  - Do not use utility tarps such as those from the hardware store: they can create a safety and boating hazard when used for this purpose.
- \*Tarps need only be in place a few weeks to have an impact on milfoil growth.
  - We have experience with three seasons of successful tarp usage. Some cottagers have over five years of favorable results. Contact the us for more information (906-484-3031).

**Cedarville Harbor.** The Planning Commission recently voted unanimously to recommend that the Clark Twp Board of Trustees approve the Harbor Improvement Project. Township Board will soon vote on this issue! Four years ago, on behalf of Clark Township, the Watershed Council applied for and was awarded a one million dollar match grant from the Michigan Waterways Commission. The driving force behind this project was to once again provide adequate docking to enable day-trippers to boat to town, run errands and get back to the cottage with minimum time and effort. Project start up has been delayed due to State budget constraints and lack of consensus between the Twp Board and the Watershed Council. A panel consisting of two members each from the Twp Trustees, the Planning Commission and the Watershed Council was appointed last summer by Supervisor Gary Reid with the charge to recommend how to best move the project forward.



Left: **Frogfest** is held annually the second Saturday in July with our primary interest being to engage the community, especially the young, to make them aware of the rich natural legacy to be enjoyed right here in Les Cheneaux.



Right: **Government Island** Trail management training by the U.S. Forest Service.

**Phragmites.** So far, so good in keeping up with the invasion of our shorelines with this reed-like cousin of bamboo. Thanks to help from you readers in identifying new phragmites patches every season we have been able to destroy new growth during each of the past five years.

This good news is thanks to a partnership with the Chippewa-Mackinac Soil Conservation District



which has been conducting the phragmites management program under a Michigan State Univ grant. Please keep vigilant and continue to report new infestations you see as you travel our channels.

**Other Invasives:** The image below shows invasive cattails, *Typha angustifolia*, growing beside the launch ramp in Cedarville. Professor Shane Lishawa of Loyola Univ, Chicago, is working with the MDNR to deal with these aggressive shoreline plants that threaten our native wetland plant community. This photo was taken by Cedarville High School students in the High School STEM class using an Aerial Unmanned Vehicle (UAV) which was sponsored by the Educational Foundation, Islands Wildlife and the Watershed Council.



**Aldo Leopold** is well known for his development of conservation ethics and wildlife management practices. Leopold spent several summers in LCI as a child and to commemorate his time here a festival is being sponsored by the Community Foundation. In support of the Leopold festival our Council has teamed up with the Historical Association (LCHA) to produce benches as shown in this photo. This type bench follows a design favored by Leopold. Proceeds from sale of the uniquely numbered, archival benches will be shared between our Council and LCHA. Contact the LCHA to buy your bench!



LES CHENEAUX WATERSHED COUNCIL  
NEWSLETTER



**Website:** We want you to have a complete package when you wish to learn more about local environmental issues. To help with this we will soon be improving our website to make it easier to locate current as well as older LCI ecology information and to improve access from most mobile devices. Yep, we'll have an app for that! Follow our progress on Facebook.

**Re-new your membership with the Les Cheneaux Watershed Council today!** We need your support to preserve the health of our waters!

Membership or Donation to the Les Cheneaux Watershed Council

- \$15 \_\_\_\_\_ Basic Membership
- \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Spring Peeper
- \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Green Frog
- \$75 \_\_\_\_\_ Tree Frog
- \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ Leopard Frog
- \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ Blue Heron
- \$1,000 \_\_\_\_\_ Wetland
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Water Guardian

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