Summary of Secord Lake Association Meeting – July 18, 2026

This recaps the key points of our in-person Member meeting. We appreciate all who attended and as a reminder our meetings are open to all. You do not need to be a Member to participate.

Key Points from July FLTF Informational Webinar

You can read the Secord Lake Association recap of this 100-minute session at **FLTF 07/08/2026 Informational Webinar**

This summary explains in more detail each of the key points below.

FLTF Update

Costs for the construction project is coming in lower than the "not to exceed" budget shared in December 2023 and there are $13.8 million pending in additional grants. This lower cost includes the $20 million in cost of delay due to legal actions.

Current capital assessment amounts were generated from the approved "not to exceed" budget less any grants received at the time.

Good News! FLTF reports, if the numbers hold, there could be a capital assessment reduction of up to 15% for property owners after the construction project is completed.

For a property that paid off the assessment, a refund to the property will be available. For those making annual payments, those payment amounts will be reduced appropriately.

More to come with 2028-29 mentioned as timing for clarification of final costs.

18

FLTF News Flash Thursday July 16th

Secord Dam Substantially Complete September 2026

However, Michigan EGLE restricts the lake refill plan from occurring between October 1 and April 15.

Because of this restriction and the low flow rates in September, we will wait to refill Secord Lake until April 2027.

This will help protect hoists and docks from being stranded on the lakebottom and exposed to ice damage.

Refill can begin on April 15, 2027.

Refill will likely take 4-6 days if there are normal spring flows.

It could take 7 days or more if spring flows are lower than usual.

It does not require a two-week pause period during refill.

21

FLTF Update

Sanford Normal ("legal") Lake Level

- Sanford Lake level is 630.5 feet, and the lake level is stable all day, with a run-of-river regimen (Water in = Water out)
  - The normal Sanford summer lake level is 630.2 (+.3 ft/-.4 ft)
  - Winter lake level is 627.2
- Prior hydropower operations were run with a peaking regimen and likely mis-calibrated their operations
  - Result was a higher Sanford lake level of approximately 3.5 inches, with more variability from pre-2020 operations

Four Lakes Normal Legal Lake Levels

- We expect to operate all lakes at the high end of the normal range, likely resulting in:
  - Wixom 3.5 inches below prior operations
  - Secord and Smallwoods 2.5 inches below prior level
- **State normal lake levels are exactly the same as the FERC-regulated levels set in 1998**
  - The legal lake levels for the four lakes were established in April 2019

LAKE	SUMMER LEVEL	WINTER LEVEL
Secord	750.6 feet	747.3 feet
Smallwood	704.6 feet	701.3 feet
Wixom	675.5 feet	672.2 feet
Sanford	630.5 feet	627.2 feet

All lake levels are based on the North American Vertical Datum of 1988 elevation system, abbreviated NAVD88.

The dams were constructed in the 1920s using local Vertical Datum. NAVD88 replaced NGVD29, which much of the dam documents were based on.

A vertical datum is similar to the concept of "sea level," but "sea level is not the same around the world.

- Possible a **conversion error** from the 1929 standard to the 1988 standard was made during prior private ownership.
- Possible the private owner(s) **mis-calibrated** their operations.
- FLTF indicates once the entire 4 Lake system is operating that will create the appropriate time to investigate options **to negotiate with the State to amend the legal lake levels via the Court to account for the inches mentioned.**

23

Headlines:

Capital Assessments costs projected to be 15% lower than planned – more details after project completion (2028-29 timeframe).

Secord Dam substantially complete Sept 2026 - - April 2027 fill to summer lake level.

Secord Lake level will be about **2-1/2 inches** lower than prior private dam operations.

The Secord Lake Association recap of this 100-minute session at **FLTF 07/08/2026 Informational Webinar** **explains each key point in more detail.**

Retake Our Lake

On August 1st there will only be 247 days until April 2027.

December will be here in 122 days.

We have a FINAL COUNTDOWN planning document – will share this week.

Sense of Urgency.

Please Help Spread the Word.

Retake Our Lake - Ken

- Retake Our Lake Plan - - **WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW**
- Sense of Urgency
- Manage Your Lake Front
- Help Your Neighbor
- Sand Bars / Public Gathering Spots
- We will be spot checking all areas we cut in the past 4 years.

Secord Lake Association

HELPING HANDS
Neighbor Helping Neighbor

What? A volunteer team helping neighbors unable to clear debris such as floating stumps, trees, and logs from their Secord Lake shoreline and immediate waterway.

When?
We are targeting **Saturday July 25th and August 29th.**

How can I volunteer to help?
Volunteer to "help your neighbor", please email SecordLakeAssociation@gmail.com

If I need some assistance?
Please email SecordLakeAssocation@gmail.com with details regarding the location and clean up required; we will reach out to you.

How to Build Your Natural Shoreline Training Sessions

Thursday, July 30th at Secord Township Hall
6 to 8 PM

Lake Improvement Projects

Lake Improvement Investments

- **$3,550** West River Drive, Park Road DNR Boat Launch, Mobile Park, Szuch Sandbar.
- **Targeted Areas:** West Branch Bay and point across from Secord Marina.
- **$7,000** contribution to Clement Township Boat Launch Repair Project.
- **$10,065** contribution to Bourret Township Boat Launch Repair Project.
- **$1,500** last summer to Secord Township Fire / Rescue team.
- **$2,000** Secord Eagles Lakeside Improvements.
- **$4,000** Fireworks from the Dam 2026.

Secord Lake Association

Funded Lake Related Initiatives

$5,000 Goose Management

$5,000 Secord Dam Site Land Use Enhancements

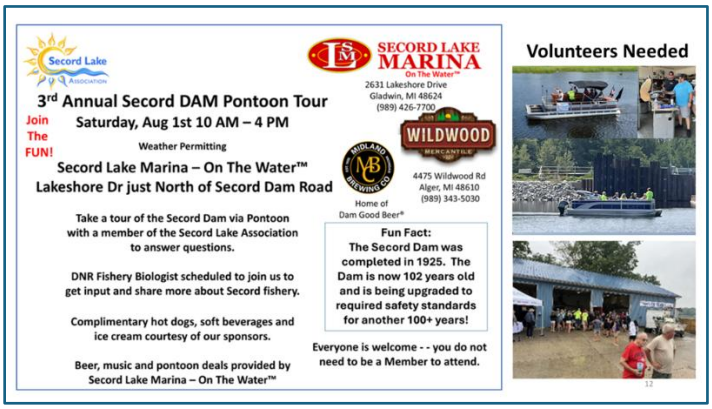
$7,051 Fireworks on the Dam

Lake Improvement Ideas Being Explored

- Creation of a team to develop and execute a plan to catch and dispose of **FLOATERS** this coming Spring.
  - Each Township
  - Gladwin County
  - FLTF
  - Secord Lake Association

  Subject matter experts may be asked to join:
  Mike – Secord Hoist Service
  Rick – Oakridge Tree Service
  Scott – Secord Lake Marina
  Others??
- To aid in boater safety, **explore adding navigational buoys** or markers to low water areas (sand bars) as water levels may have changed and we have new property owners on the lake.
- Add a **portable dock / pier and trash cans** at both Clement and Bourret Township Boat Launches.

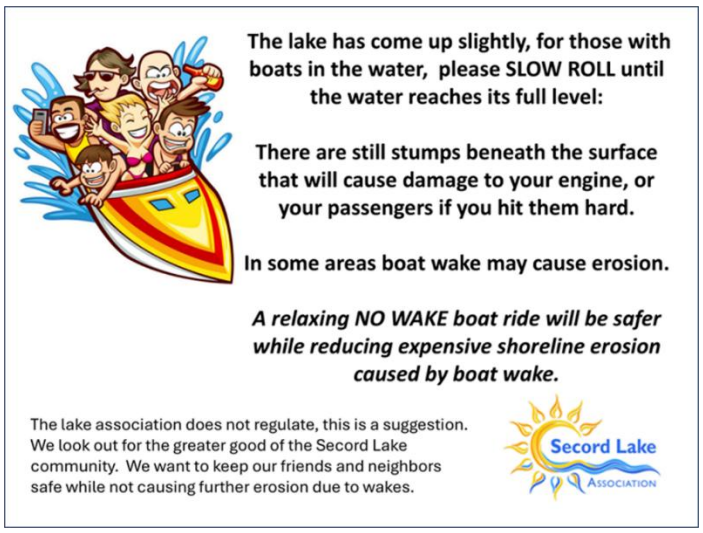
Secord Social Events Scheduled



6th Annual Golf Outing

Click here to learn more and register your team!

Q&A / Reminders



It was mentioned there seems to be additional property owners along the West Branch dealing with erosion challenges this year, which were not evident last year.

The high water in April may be a contributing factor. We wish our neighbors success in protecting their sea walls and boat lifts.

The SLOW ROLL suggestion focuses on safety along with respect for our neighbors and friends as boat wakes may produce erosion.

EGLE Permitting – Michigan lakefront property owners must obtain permits from the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) for shoreline construction, dredging, or filling. While seasonal, single-family docks often do not require permits, permanent structures, shoreline alterations, and beach sanding typically require authorization.

Learn more here: **Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy**

We also suggest you check with your local township zoning department before starting a project. We do have a resource that is familiar with the permitting process for dredging. Contact us if you want to learn more.

Dumping Debris on Lakebed

There was utter shock in the room as examples of property owners knowingly dumping treetops, branches, weeds and other debris on the lakebed were shared. It appears these people expect the high water to "carry the debris away". If you see this, remind your neighbor this debris will float and cause more problems for others later.

Our mission as property owners is to prepare Secord for summer lake levels. This means removing anything that can float from the lakebed.

Please make us aware of any debris dumping situations. We will explain the situation to the property owner and if unsuccessful, the DNR and EGLE have stringent regulations against dumping.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, Aug 15th at 10 AM – Secord Township Hall.

Saturday, Aug 15	Secord Dam Pontoon Tour – Saturday, Aug 1st Secord Lake Marin –On The Water
Saturday, Sept 12	SLA Golf Outing – Saturday, Sept 19
Saturday, Oct 10	SLA Chili Cook Off – Saturday, Oct 17

www.SecordLakeAssociation.org SecordLakeAssociation@gmail.com

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