



Summary of Secord Lake Association Meeting – April 18, 2026

This recaps the key headlines of our first in-person Member meeting of the 2026 season. We appreciate all who ventured out in the downpour to attend. We realize this summary will not capture the excitement, enthusiasm, hope and appreciation that filled Secord Township Hall on this Spring Saturday morning.

SLA Fundraising Investments - Phil



Invested = \$27,115

- **\$3,550** Cuttings → West River Drive, Park Road DNR Boat Launch, Mobile Park, Szuch Sandbar.
- **\$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.
- **\$5,000** Four Lakes Housing Support Fund

Allocated Funds = \$16,000

- **\$5,000** Dam Recreational Plan
- **\$5,000** Goose Management
- **\$6,000** Fireworks on the Lake



Phil reported since last Fall the Secord Lake Association (SLA) has made \$27,115 in contributions towards initiatives with \$22,000 focused on specific Secord Lake Improvement Projects.

There are three active projects with dedicated funds of \$16,000 to help support the initiatives outlined.

Phil thanked our Members, Sponsors, and supporters for making these contributions possible through fundraising efforts over the past 6 years.

Joel informed us the MI House has passed the Deferred Assessment Legislation with overwhelming bipartisan support. The MI Senate now considers the bill. The goal is for passage by the MI Senate by the end of summer for the Governor's signature.

Deferred Assessment Legislation - Joel



Joel Vernier with MI Rep Mike Hoadley

Mike and Bill are co-sponsors of the Deferred Assessment Legislation



Joel Vernier with MI Rep Bill G. Schuette

House Committee Advances Plan Protecting Seniors in Four Lakes Area, Across Michigan

- Option for some elderly, low-income homestead properties with assessments.
- Includes permanently disabled.
- MI House approved.
- Current MI Senate then to Governor.

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Secord Eagles Club - Phil



RIVER OF FLAGS



Annual River of Flags →
Due date May 13th
Cost is just \$5.00 per Flag
Sign up at the Club

Eagles July 11th Celebration

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The Eagles Club asked we remind people of the annual River of Flags event and to watch for details of a celebration scheduled for July 11th.

Membership - Marti



Membership is SLA Fiscal Year (Sept – Aug)

Individual Membership -- \$25 / year (1 vote per membership for the person)

Family Membership -- \$35 / year (2 votes allowed by adults) Family membership includes immediate family members, 2 votes by separate adult members of the Family

Business Membership -- \$50 / year (1 vote per membership for the business)

2025 Memberships are grandfathered until September 2026.

Our MEMBERS Make A Difference!

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We celebrate **Our Members Make A Difference** though numerous examples over the years to restore Secord and to help make our lake community better for generations to come.

Membership is just \$25 a year for an individual or \$35 a year for a family.

<https://www.secordlakeassociation.org/membership>

Golf Event - Kim

2025 SLA Golf Outing raised \$13,231

Thank You Brent for your past leadership



Congratulations to our 1st place team of Chris Szpara, LeeAnn Campbell-Clayton, Brian Harnos, and Mia Harnos.

2nd place went to Brian Gellings, Dan Oguin, Bryan Deiner, and Pat Madden.

10th place went to Craig Whipple, Adam Schroth, Alex Wells, and Larry Schroth.

Closest to the pin went to Paula Arnold and Tom Irving.

Longest drive went to Korrin Fry and Glenn Belcher.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
September 19, 2026**



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Our **Annual Golf Outing raised \$13,231** last year -- this year's date is Saturday, September 19th. More details to come.

Chili Cook Off - Paul

2025 SLA Chili Cook Off raised \$10,011



**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
October 17, 2026
Secord Eagles Club**



2025 Winners!

1st Place – Courtney Friedle

2nd Place – Jim Braidwood

3rd Place – Christopher Ochab

The **Annual SLA Chili Cook-Off raised \$10,011** last year and is a fun way to wrap up the summer lake season.

This year's event will be back at the Secord Lake Eagles with music by Secord's own Mike O'Dette at the Eagles' afterparty.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 17th.

Our Sponsors Make A Difference -- THANK YOU for Your Continued Support!



We value and appreciate our Sponsors. Many have supported our efforts for multiple years.

If a Sponsor provides a good or service you may need, please consider allowing them the opportunity to earn your business.

Our Sponsors and community engagement with our fund-raising events allow SLA to make contributions toward Secord Lake Improvements.

FLTF Update - Jeff



- Substantial Completion Date remains Sept 2026. EGLE permit required to fill.

Secord currently about 4-1/2 feet below normal summer fill.
Winter lake level will be 3 feet lower than normal summer.
Meaning Secord is currently about 1-1/2 feet lower than normal winter lake fill.

- FLTF goal is to have Secord at normal summer fill by October 1, 2026.
 - > Lake will be drawn down to normal winter level in Dec 2026.

If Secord cannot be filled to normal summer level by October 1, 2026, FLTF will delay lake fill until Spring 2027 to reduce likelihood of ice damage to lifts, hoists and piers.

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There is an SLA recap from the FLTF Informational Webinar from March 4, 2026. You can click here to learn more →

[FLTF Informational Webinar Recap](#)

Once Secord Lake is restored to full legal lake level, we can expect the same lake levels (summer and winter) we experienced prior to the FERC ordered draw down. We should experience more consistent lake levels in the future as the lake level will not be manipulated for hydro power generation.

Despite the construction challenges of the frigid winter weather combined with the abnormally high-water levels, FLTF indicates the substantial completion date remains September 2026. If this forecast changes, we will be informed.

Once construction is substantially complete, and EGLE issues a permit, fill can take place.

FLTF indicates last summer Secord Lake is about 4-1/2 feet below normal summer lake level. Normal winter lake level is about 3 feet below normal summer lake level.

Meaning Secord's future normal winter lake level will be 1-1/2 feet higher than the level we experienced last summer.

We can expect the same summer level this coming summer as last.

For this fall, assuming Secord Lake is filled to normal summer level, the lake will lower to normal winter level in December as in years past.

We realize there are questions regarding the Capital Assessment as the second bond will be issued this coming May.

As every situation is unique, we encourage people to review the recent letter received from FLTF and go to the FLTF website to learn more.

It was mentioned at our meeting that this past year's capital assessment was a reduced amount as there was only a principal payment applied to bond #2 as there was no interest calculation. The next capital assessment will contain full amounts for both bonds.

FLTF Assessment Update - Jeff

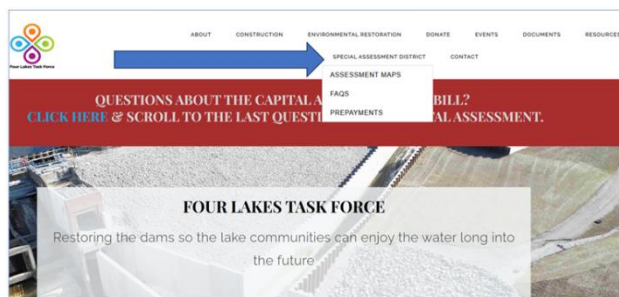


- Project remains within the "NOT TO EXCEED" amount.
 - Final project costs could be lower than "not to exceed" amount even when factoring in the \$18 Million cost of delay.
- BOND #1 – Secured in June 2025 for \$80 Million @ 5.94% over 40 years.
- BOND #2 – To be issued May 2026 not to exceed \$95 million over 40 years. Interest rate to be determined at bond issuance.
- Property owners may prepay all or a portion to avoid interest. 2026 Bond series deadline is May 5, 2026.
- Please see letter from FLTF or visit FLTF web site to learn more:

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FLTF Assessment Information

www.fourlakes taskforce.com



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One of the most frequently asked questions since 2020: What about boat lifts and piers currently stranded on the lakebed?

FLTF indicates the substantial completion date for Secord is September 2026. While we are cautiously optimistic this is shortened, the answer to this question is important as there are hundreds of pieces of property owner equipment on the lakebed. In addition, the company owners providing hoist service seek guidance so they can plan and communicate with customers.

Our lake association continues to be in close contact with FLTF engineers as they are aware of this issue. We followed up after the March webinar. To address this specific question, as of Saturday (March 7, 2026) there are two scenarios:

- 1) The FLTF **Secord Primary Plan** is to get the lake up to normal summer level no later than October 1, 2026. Secord will then need to be lowered to normal winter level in December 2026.

This will allow property owners with equipment on the lakebed the opportunity to have it removed before winter ice.

FLTF **cannot** fill per the permit between October 1 and April 15. MI DNR will not deviate on these dates.

- 2) As FLTF gets closer to the substantial completion date, if it does not look like Secord can make normal summer lake level by October 1, then FLTF recommends leaving the lake at the summer 2025 level, even if it could get to the winter level, to avoid the risk of ice damage of private property on the lake bottom.

In this scenario Secord Lake will fill to normal summer legal lake level beginning April 2027.

FLTF will continue to keep the Secord Lake community updated on their progress as they strive toward the goal to meet the substantial completion date of September 2026.

SLA Members Mike and Sharon Byler own / operate Secord Hoist Service. They are aware and begin to communicate their plans for the coming season to customers and the lake community.

Stranded Boat Lifts, Hoists and Piers



Secord Hoist Service
Mike and Sharon Byler, Members
989-426-5003
SecordHoistService@gmail.com

The Plan →

Assuming full lake level by Oct 1 and they can launch their barge.

Mike and his team believe they can remove the stranded equipment as this is a "remove and place" with no adjustments required as with an install.

Call learn more and to get on their customer list **989-426-5003**

Mike suggests repairs be made this summer ahead of next year. Cables, bunks, pulleys, electrical components, etc.

We are pleased to offer this option to our Members and the Secord community as a solution to a complex problem. This will require communication and coordination.

If other hoist companies provide opportunities, we look forward to learning more. At this point this is the only viable solution we are aware of to solve this issue for those with stranded equipment within the potential tight window of October 1 to mid-November.

We continue to be cautiously optimistic. However, for our friends and neighbors with equipment stranded on the lakebed this is the beginning of a plan to provide the opportunity for safe removal.

With the abnormally high water, here is what we suggest:

- 1) Check your items to make sure they are secure. Please check on your neighbors.
- 2) If something floats up, please secure it so you can safely remove it. Leaving it float will only cause problems later.
- 3) If a floater shows up and you need help, please secure it and then email us so we can contact you. SecordLakeAssociation@gmail.com

We will likely be dealing with floating objects for the next 12 months or so. As property owners we will need to work together to solve these problems.



Retake Our Lake / SLOW ROLL - Ken

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



The lake has come up slightly, for those with boats in the water, please **SLOW ROLL** until the water reaches its full level:

There are still stumps beneath the surface that will cause damage to your engine, or your passengers if you hit them hard.

In some areas boat wake may cause erosion.

A relaxing NO WAKE boat ride will be safer while reducing expensive shoreline erosion caused by boat wake.

The lake association does not regulate, this is a suggestion. We look out for the greater good of the Secord Lake community. We want to keep our friends and neighbors safe while not causing further erosion due to wakes.



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We appreciate people sharing lost items on Facebook in attempts to find the owner of the wayward property.

Thanks to all that are proactively securing items to keep them from floating.

The good news about floating wood it will dry and can be enjoyed at a campfire.

We likely have 5 months or so to complete our shoreline clean-up projects. [Property owners can click here to learn what you can do now.](#)

We recommend **SLOW ROLL** again this summer for obvious reasons. Boaters accessing the lake now should pay close attention to the dangers of FLOATERS.

Ken updated the learning and challenges of DNR Forestry Management around the Secord Lake area. The logging is typically done by contractors, and the challenge is the condition the area is left after work is complete. Ken outlined his next steps the local DNR Forestry Manager.

Ken provided an update on ORV trail management around Secord Lake. As an association, we understand and respect that ORV travel is part of the up north experience with a desire for a safe trail network to access the local businesses around the lake.

DNR Alignment Forestry - Ken

- We understand the need to harvest.
- Issue is condition logger leaves site.
- Next Steps with Blair:
- Pictures / discuss conditions immediately after clear cutting.
- Examples of what clear cutting looks like in 5, 10 and or 20 years.
- Explore why some areas are left with almost no trees with excessive debris on the ground and ruts to the point walking is almost impossible (example north of Secord Dam Road).
- Why do some areas have more selective trees remaining and less debris on the ground and can be walked today only a few months after they have been cleared (west of M-30 and north of Finkbeiner Rd) ?
- Review **DNR's Visual Quality Management Guidelines*** as some very visible clear-cut areas in Gladwin do not appear to be following guidelines.

Blair Tweedale
Gladwin Unit Manager
Forest Resources Division



Department of Natural Resources

Forestry



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DNR Alignment ORV - Ken

UPCOMING EVENT: Secord Lake Eagles
DNR ORV Law Presentation / Q&A
Sunday April 19th, 1:00PM

Decision from DNR Regarding West River Drive to Secord Dam Road Proposed ORV Route "The concept of an ORV route on state land in the West River Drive area is not supported by the DNR. Local and district level representatives from Law Enforcement Division, Parks and Recreation Division, Wildlife Division and the Forestry Division unanimously oppose the concept. The DNR has received public comments both in support of, and strong opposition to motorized usage in this area of West River Drive." – Blair Tweedale

If you have concerns regarding Forest Management and or ORV Trail Management, please reach out to MI Representative Mike Hoadley. Mike is actively involved in a House Committee focused on DNR improvements.
MikeHoadley@house.mi.gov

Blair Tweedale
Forest Resources Division

Blake Gingrich
Northeast Lower Peninsula-
Trails Specialist

Department of Natural Resources

ORV riding



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DNR Alignment Fishery - Jeff

- Several meetings / interactions over the winter.
- **SLA Secord Lake Fishery Advisory Committee**
- Last survey June 2008 → Plans for 2026.
- Last Walleye stocking 2016 / Musky Oct 2022.

- Voluntary Anglers Diary.
- Fish Harvest Recommendations.

- Secord Stocking? Survey and Anglers Diary will help DNR understand our fishery.
- Stocking = State of MI or Private Permit.

April Morey
DNR Fisheries Biologist



Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries management



Jeff introduced a new committee established over the winter. The **Secord Lake Fishery Advisory Committee** is established to partner with the DNR Fisheries Biologist to champion and communicate responsible management of the Secord Lake fishery for generations to come.

There will be more shared on this initiative in the coming weeks.

A concern shared the marking of tree trunks in the lake with either arrows or driveway markers posing a potential safety risk to unsuspecting swimmers (or people jumping off a boat) when the legal lake level returns. We understand the past few years, individuals may have marked stumps in an effort to assist with navigation. The use of a string and milk bottle attached via nail to a stump, other examples include pool noodles, arrows and driveway markers sticking straight up from the stump.

There was agreement in the room that driveway markers or arrows sticking straight up may pose future risk as they will be under the normal lake water level. While SLA has no regulatory authority, we encourage people to not use this method to mark stumps.

There will come a point toward completion of the dam restoration when the gap in the auxiliary spillway will be closed. At that point, we will be informed as there will likely be a slight drop in water level. As a lake community, it will be beneficial to remove ALL stump markers at that time. Again, SLA has no regulatory authority, is not engaged in marking stumps, but will act as a communication conduit to the lake community to seek removal of ALL stump markers prior to return to legal lake level.

There were two questions noted for further research.

- 1) How will the assessment impact the sale of property in the future or the property value? NOTE: After the meeting we researched this question. While there is no definitive answer, this document posted in June 2025 may provide some perspective. [Click here to read more about Real Estate with Special Assessment.](#)
- 2) For property owners on the far end of the West Branch, around and north of the Four Seasons subdivision, there appears to be continuing sediment issues. We appreciate SLA working with us to make FLTF aware in 2023 and seek assistance in informing them of lake bottom changes that have / may occur with legal lake levels.

Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 16th at 10 AM – Secord Township Hall.

Saturday, May 16

Saturday, Aug 15

Saturday, June 20

Saturday, Sept 12

SLA Golf Outing – Saturday, Sept 19

Saturday, July 18

Saturday, Oct 10

SLA Chili Cook Off – Saturday, Oct 17

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