



Secord Retake Our Lake Update - Sept 12, 2023

The Secord Lake Association (SLA), in partnership with property owners along with the County and Townships, is focused on preparing Secord Lake to return to the legal lake level. There continues to be planning and work on nuisance weed / tree control, shoreline clean-up of debris, and to cut some of the tall tree trunks sticking out of the water.

The Secord Lake Association is a volunteer club. As property owners and friends of Secord, we seek to create a safe, enjoyable lake environment for generations to come. Seeing Secord refilled with nuisance trees, the loss of full use of the public areas on the lake and floating debris is not a future we desire. While we cannot beat Mother Nature, we believe we can work with her to RETAKE areas of our lake.

This past April and June we shared the planned activities focused on our collective efforts to manage nuisance trees. This is our September update.

With 69 miles of shoreline and 1100 acres of water, the entirety of Secord Lake will need a coordinated effort. This will take a volunteer effort to RETAKE OUR LAKE.

We celebrate to collective efforts of property owners, volunteers, townships and contracted partners in the progress over the summer of 2023 to RETAKE OUR LAKE. If one thinks back to early Spring and then moves their mind to today, the progress all along Secord is amazing! THANK YOU!

With the lake drawn down, why treat the aquatic weeds?

The aquatic weeds continue to grow and need to be managed. Imagine an uncontrolled aquatic weed mass growing and then having 8-10 feet of water applied to the top of it when the Lake is restored. The unchecked weeds will quickly grow to fill in the 8-10 feet of water causing the Lake to “choke out” making boat traffic nearly impossible. Weed choked lakes are not conducive to fish, wildlife, or water sports.

Secord, Clement, and Bourret Townships continue to manage this weed growth with periodic treatments by PLM. The goal is to keep the weeds managed during the drawdown to position the Lake for the return of full water.

PLM, at the direction of the MI DNR, focused on evasive weeds this summer to support the fishery. PLM treated the lake for exotic aquatic weeds in the months of June, July, and August.

As property owners our weed assessment fees are used to manage the lake, not simply the area in front of our properties. Weed assessment fees are used to treat aquatic weeds and Secord Township has / is using some of these funds to address nuisance tree management on the public sand bars and some public boating areas within the Township. You will read more about these initiatives in a moment. We appreciate and value the three Townships working together.

Summer 2024 Planning

FLTF is working with EGLE to secure a permit to leverage the Secord auxiliary spillway when completed to allow work on both primary spillways / gates. If approved, this may increase lake level modestly in March – May 2024. **THIS IS A COMPLICATED PERMIT REQUEST - - you can learn more [HERE](#)**

- 1) FLTF is seeking a permit from EGLE to leverage the auxiliary spillway to work on primary spillways and gates. This should help improve the schedule and costs. **The Permit has not been approved.**
- 2) If the Permit is approved, there will be a modest rise in the **March to June 2024 timeframe**. The FLTF is aware of boat lifts and piers - - - **water will not be raised ahead of winter ice**. To be specific, there is **NO** plan to raise the water level in the fall of 2023.
- 3) **If the Permit is approved, we will receive details of the plan to include timing. This is an extremely complicated permit request**, should it be approved by EGLE, FLTF will provide an updated inundation (water level) map for Secord based on the approved design and water elevation.
- 4) If water is raised modestly, the Permit request is to **not lower** it after work is complete.
- 5) The FLTF indicates the increase will not likely expand recreation use much.
- 6) Today, this contingency provides a sense of urgency to complete individual property owner clearing and SLA projects in calendar 2023 or assuming safe ice for some projects over the 2023-24 winter months.

Property Owners



We celebrate the wonderful work being done around Secord Lake as property owners manage their lake frontage area. It's amazing to witness the initiative property owners along our lake have shown. THANK YOU!

There is a link at the end to the overall Secord Retake Our Lake plan. Please share this with your friends and neighbors as they may seek this information. When you post a picture of your project on Facebook, use the #RetakeOurLake.

Nuisance Trees

While the Summer 2020 direction was not to access the lakebed due to it being unstable with possible sink holes, the lakebed appears to be stable now to allow for access. Property owners should use **caution** to enter the lakebed to manage the nuisance trees and weeds. There are still soft or mushy spots that can be hazards for people, pets, and equipment. You can learn more here www.SecordLakeAssociation.org/restoring-secord

If you live on a cut or in a neighborhood that may need to develop a plan, we are happy to help. Please email us at SecordLakeAssociation@gmail.com. A member of our team looks forward to discussing ideas with you.

Public Gathering Sand Bar Areas

The three public gathering sand bars are located in Secord Township. Secord Township has partnered with the Secord Lake Association to restore the sand bars. The Township has hired professional contractors to cut the nuisance trees.



Sand Bar 3 and 2 were cut by Secord Township in November 2022 using the forestry mulcher pictured in the middle. Sand Bar 1 was cut in May 2023 using a different contractor and machine as the forestry mulcher could not access the sand bar area.

We have experienced continued growth on the sandbars over the 2023 summer. Our plan this fall include the following steps:

- 1) PLM will spray the nuisance trees along the sand bars in early September. The solution needs about 4 weeks to work into the nuisance trees.
- 2) Secord Township will use contractors to cut the nuisance trees as needed on the sandbars.
- 3) After the cutting, volunteer workdays will be scheduled for each of the sand bars. Volunteers will be needed to remove debris and cut stubble. Watch for dates in mid to late October stretching into November.

A question people may have - - - why do these areas need additional attention to manage nuisance trees before the water returns? It's because the nuisance trees grew over the summer. Had we not cut earlier the nuisance trees would be over 16 feet tall with thicker tree trunks making them more difficult to remove.

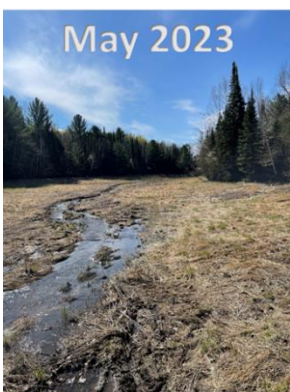
A follow up – will we need to do this again? No one knows. When we met with EGLE to review our plan, they commented the things we are doing to RETAKE OUR LAKE have never been done before. We are all learning as we move forward.

People have asked if these contractors will hire out their services for property owners. The answer is yes depending on the lake bottom, the size of the area needing to be addressed and access to the lake bottom for the machines.

The forestry mulcher is owned by Dan Burgess of Mid Land Maintenance, LLC. Dan can be reached at 989-429-1686.

The walk behind brush hog is owned by Scott Sczepanski of Shoreline Brush Hog Services. Scott can be reached at 313-283-3887

Park Road DNR Boat Launch Area



Thanks to Secord Lake Association fund-raising efforts focused on Secord Lake Improvements, the Association contracted with Shoreline Brush Hog Services to cut a large lakebed area.

This fall we will evaluate this area again.

This fall, a group of volunteers, organized by the Secord Lake Association will be picking up debris from this area. Watch for details.

Secord Township Public Boating Areas



West Branch Bay Cutting November 2022

In November 2022, Secord Township contracted Mid Land Maintenance, LLC to remove nuisance trees in large public boating areas that extended into the lake.

The 5+ acre bay located at the end of West Branch Drive is the area is used by pontoons and boats to watch nature or fish and is also accessed by many kayaks. This area would have been deemed not usable when the water returns due to the number of and size of the nuisance trees.

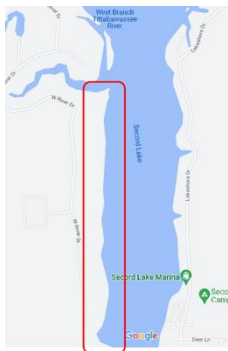
A stretch that runs on the East Shore of the main lake from the dam to Secord Lake Marina as also cut by Secord Township in November 2022.

Nuisance trees grew back to almost 6 feet over the summer of 2023 - - - the plan is to cut these areas again in the fall of 2023. We thank Secord Township for your continued support.

West River Drive (West side of the main lake)

In June, members of the Secord Lake Association walked the lakebed in the area outlined in red on the map below. We applaud the vast number of property owners that have cleaned and maintained the area in front of their properties going out 50 feet or more in many cases from shore.

The challenge we had in this area is the size of the pasture of nuisance trees that emerged. While property owners have cleaned at least 50 feet out from their shore, the nuisance trees continued toward the middle of the.



We realized if we do not RETAKE the area where the nuisance trees are growing, when water returns these nuisance trees will be above lake level rendering this area unsafe for boaters or swimmers.

We asked property owners to take responsibility to clean and maintain the first 50 feet or so of lakebed from their shoreline. The collective efforts of these neighbors are outstanding - - you did a great job this summer. THANK YOU!

Secord Township in coordination with the Secord Lake Association, contracted Mid Land Maintenance, LLC with the forestry mulcher to remove the nuisance trees. This project focused on the nuisance trees, NOT the existing tree stumps. This area was cut the weekend of August 19th.

We are evaluating what additional clean-up work is required - - there may be the need for a volunteer clean-up day this coming fall. Watch for details.

Nuisance Tree Trunks and Stumps

Thanks to Secord Lake Association fund-raising efforts focused on Secord Lake Improvements, the Association contracted with Oak Ridge Tree Service to address some of these tree trunks. Rick and his team have the expertise, equipment, safety training and insurance to properly tackle this project. The plan is for us to continue to survey the lake via boat to develop the plan with Oak Ridge to identify tree trunks and stumps to be addressed. Oak Ridge will then execute the plan once the ice is safe this coming winter.

There will be more to share with this initiative as the plan takes shape. Fund raising makes this possible.

Other Ideas

The Secord Lake Association is a volunteer club. We are property owners and friends of Secord. With 69 miles of shoreline and 1100 acres of water, this will take a volunteer effort to RETAKE OUR LAKE.

If you have ideas, suggestions or want to get involved, drop us a note at SecordLakeAssociation@gmail.com. A member of our Retake Our Lake team will contact you to learn more.

Retake Our Lake Campaign – What Can You Do

While the FLTF focuses their energy on restoration of the dams, each lake community is responsible to prepare the lake to accept water. The Secord Lake Association has a detailed plan outlining what property owners can do to help prepare the lakebed to receive water. This plan focuses on safety and has other components the lake association will coordinate. www.SecordLakeAssociation.org/restoring-secord

Save The Dates

The Secord Lake Association holds monthly meetings. Here is the meeting schedule for rest of this season:

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------|-----------------------------|
| SLA Meeting with Update Presentation | Sat, Sept 16 | 10 AM | Secord Townhall |
| SLA Golf Outing | Sat, Sept 23 | | Gladwin Heights Golf Course |
| SLA Secord Chili Cook Off 2023 | Sat, Oct 7 | | Lost Arrow |
| SLA Meeting with Update Presentation | Sat, Oct 21 | 10AM | Secord Townhall |

The Secord Lake Association has two more fundraisers planned for lake improvement projects. The annual Golf Outing will be held on Saturday, September 23rd at Gladwin Heights Golf Course. The 2nd annual Secord Chili Cook Off is Saturday, October 7 at the Lost Arrow. Check the website for details

www.SecordLakeAssociation.org

Secord dam is targeted to be completed in late 2024 with legal lake level the summer 2025 – The Secord Lake Association is focused on what is needed to prepare Secord to return.

You can learn more at Secord Lake | Secord Lake Association | Restoring Secord

Become a Member - - the Secord Lake Association is made up of volunteers focused on restoring Secord to create a lake community for generations to come. Visit us at www.secordlakeassociation.org

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