

Portage Lake Watershed Forever

fall 2008 update



Portage Lake Watershed Forever
P.O. Box 299
Onkama, MI 49675

● Putting the Pieces Together . . .

One of the most efficient ways to accomplish an undertaking as extensive as the Portage Lake Watershed Forever Plan is through master plans, ordinances and ordinance administration and enforcement. As luck would have it, Onkama Township and the Village of Onkama are working to complete such a Joint Community Master Plan.

Concerns identified by year-round and seasonal residents (water quality, community character and natural resources) are key factors being weighed by the Leadership Team working to develop the plan. You can learn much more about it at an informal **Open House** on Tuesday, November 25, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Farr Center.

When the DEQ approved the Portage Lake Watershed Forever Plan in early June, an impressive list of watershed projects were launched - with many more in the wings. . .

● Portage Lake Stewardship Homeowners' Packets

Nearly 1,000 packets of information were compiled by dozens

of volunteers and hand-delivered in mid-July to households in the Portage Lake watershed. Materials included watershed 'basics'; tips on maintaining watershed-friendly lawns; the proper use and upkeep of septic systems; threats posed by phosphorus and invasive species, and more. If you didn't receive these handouts, check on-line at portagelakewatershed.net.

● **You talkin' to me?** - A large banner was raised on M-22 to focus attention on how our actions impact the watershed: "**What we put in the watershed, stays in the watershed. Think about it.**"

● **Signs of the times** - The Manistee County Road Commission installed permanent signs on seven county roads (Milarch, 8 Mile, 9 Mile, Lakeshore, Miller and 11 Mile Roads) to let people know they were entering the watershed.

● **Invasion!** In late September, the Portage Lake Association, the Portage Lake Garden Club and Jr. Clio hosted a Phragmites Demonstration Project.

Over 100 people attended.

They heard all about this aggressive, invasive non-native plant and learned that a survey of the lake would be conducted to



determine how much was present. After further consideration, however, a decision was made to survey the entire lake for *all* invasive species. Results indicate that 75% of Portage Lake

shows evidence of Phragmites *and* there are significant amounts of Eurasian water milfoil also present.

The PLWF Executive Committee took immediate action and appointed a work group to help develop a 5-year comprehensive strategy to control and manage this problem. (*The complete report and additional information is available at portagelakewatershed.net.*)



Elizabeth J. Carrigan

● **Water Testing** - The PLWF Monitoring and Inventory Committee and the Village of Onkama took weekly water samples for E. coli testing at the Village Beach. During July and August, seven other places on the lake were tested three times for E. coli.

Oxygen Levels Normal - The Little River Band of Ottawa Indians tested for dissolved oxygen levels in two deep holes in the lake and one shallow location. The samples indicate that oxygen stratification levels in the lake were normal.



OHS Testing - For the 13th straight year, Onekama High School students conducted semi-annual water tests as part of their earth science classes. The information they've gathered comprises the longest data set available about Portage Lake.

www.portagelakewatershed.net - A website dedicated to the Portage Lake and Onekama area was created this summer with the guidance of PLA. Find the entire 127-page Portage Lake Watershed Forever Plan, results of water testing and other projects, and updates about Portage Lake Watershed Forever Endowment Fund. Good stuff.

Portage Lake Watershed Forever Plan

“The **purpose** of the PLWF Plan is to engage all interests in the community in developing a living document that will ensure the wise use and enjoyment of the Portage Lake watershed for present and future generations.”

“The **vision** of the PLFW Plan is that the Portage Lake watershed will be preserved forever by investing in protection and enhancement of natural and related cultural and historical resources in the watershed, to provide economic benefit, and to improve the quality of life for present and future residents and visitors.”

Portage Lake Watershed Forever Plan. Executive Summary

Tah-Dah! While everyone deserves thanks for contributing time, money, and energy to the Watershed Plan, members of the Portage Lake Association, the Portage Lake Garden Club merit special recognition. They have been deeply involved and continue to take part in all aspects of the plan's implementation.

It takes a watershed . . .

The **Portage Lake Watershed Forever Endowment** was created at the Manistee County Community Foundation (MCCF) to enable all of us to make charitable, tax-deductible donations to implement the Plan in perpetuity. Any and all contributions are welcome. For your convenience, use the form below or visit MCCF on-line at www.manisteefoundation.org. *Thank You!*

Portage Lake Watershed Forever Endowment Fund

Please credit my/our gift to the permanent endowment.

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