

# Lake Lansing Newsletter

## The Expansion of Aquatic Invasive Species

The introduction of invasive species can occur through various pathways, including ballast water discharge from ships, release by aquarium hobbyists, hitchhiking on waterfowl, and accidental transport on recreational boats and trailers. Once introduced to a new waterbody, these species can quickly overtake portions of a lake. The impact of aquatic invasive species extends beyond biological diversity; they can also cause economic losses by damaging fisheries and hindering recreational activities.

An additional permanent boat wash station has been added to the Lake Lansing Boat Launch to better accommodate incoming boat traffic (pictured below). This will provide further protection against the introduction of invasive species to Lake Lansing.

Required actions – it’s the law in Michigan

- Remove all aquatic organisms, including plants, from watercraft and trailers before launching or transporting.
- Remove all drain plugs and drain all water from bilges, ballast tanks and live wells before transporting a watercraft.
- Dispose of unused bait in the trash, not in the water.

Recommended additional actions – protect our waters by following these steps

- Clean boats, trailers and equipment by removing plants, debris, and mud before leaving the access area. Dispose of the material in a trash receptacle or otherwise away from the water body, if possible.
- Wash boats and trailers before leaving the access area, if possible, or at a nearby car wash or at home.
- Dry boats and equipment for five days before launching into a different water body.
- Disinfect live wells and bilges with a bleach solution (1/2 cup bleach to 5 gallons water.) (EGLE, 2023)



# Summer

# 2024

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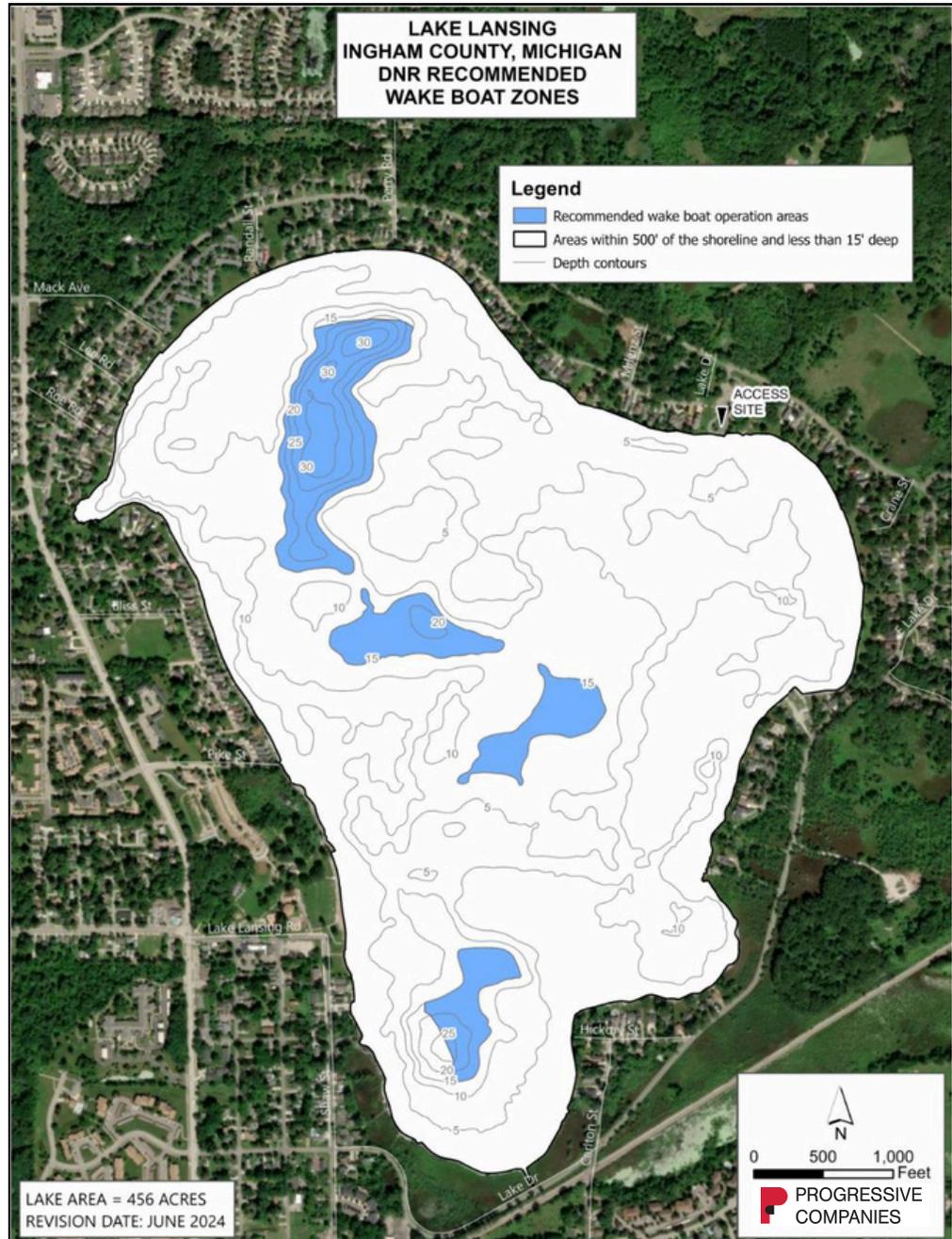
## DNR Wake Boat Recommendations

A wake boat is a recreational powerboat that is used for the purpose of creating large wakes to enhance the sports of wakeboarding and wake surfing. In recent years, these boats have gained popularity on inland lakes like Lake Lansing. Their usage has resulted in unintended negative consequences to some lake ecosystems in Michigan. Boats used for wake surfing create larger wakes than other recreational watercraft as they typically fill ballast tanks with water to weigh them down, displacing immense amounts of water to create a large wake. Many of these boats are also outfitted with hydraulic trim tabs that increase the steepness of the wake.

The operation of wake boats in shallow water and near shore areas has significant impacts on the lake bottom and shoreline habitat. When a wake boat is operating at wake surfing speed, approximately ten miles per hour, the boat's stern is angled down, pointing the propeller towards the lake bottom. When operating in waters shallower than 15 feet, the turbulence from the propellers can disrupt the lake bottom, resuspending sediments, uprooting aquatic plants, and displacing valuable habitat. This resuspension of sediment reduces water clarity and introduces phosphorus into the water column, increasing the chance for algae blooms. Lake Lansing has extensive shallow areas, and is therefore at increased risk for ecosystem degradation.

The Michigan DNR has published recommendations for safe and environmentally friendly wake boat operation based on their literature review published in 2023. "The [Fisheries] Division recommends that wake boats operating in wake-surfing or wake-boarding mode do so in water that is at least 15 feet deep (MDNR 2023)." The Division also recommends "Boats operating in wake-surfing mode or wake-boarding mode, during which boat speed, wave shapers, and/or ballast are used to increase wave height, are recommended to operate at least 500 feet from docks or the shoreline, regardless of water depth (MDNR 2023)." **These recommendations are not rule or law, but are meant to educate wake boat owners on how to most responsibly operate wake boats to care for Michigan's inland lakes.**

The adjacent map shows a 500-foot buffer from the shoreline and areas shallower than 15 feet in white. Due to its extensive shallow areas, Lake Lansing has limited safe wake boating areas.



### References:

EGLE. 2023. 'Clean, Drain, Dry' is the message at boating, fishing outreach events marking Aquatic Invasive Species Awareness Week.  
Francis, J, J. Nohner, J. Bauman, and B. Gunderman. 2023. A literature review of wake boat effects on aquatic habitat. Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Fisheries Report 37, Lansing