



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



South Higgins Lake State Park Concession Building

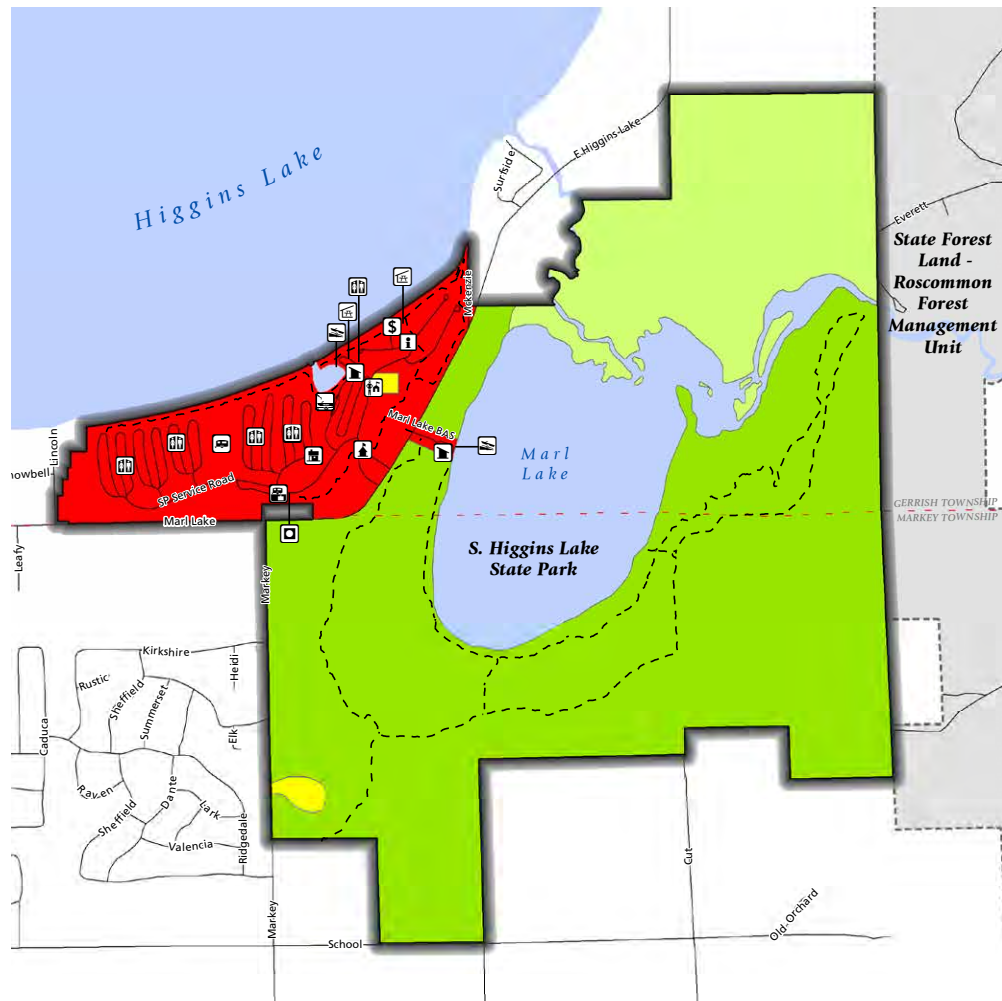
South Higgins Lake State Park

GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Approved June 7, 2019
Rev. 2/21/2020 to correct park acreage

Prepared with the assistance of

B R 
Beckett&Raeder
www.bria2.com



S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Management Zones

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- Trails

Management Zones:

- Administrative Services
- Primitive
- Backcountry
- Developed Recreation

- S Concession/Store
- A Contact Station
- H Headquarters
- I Informational
- M Mini Cabin
- P Pavilion
- B Boat Wash

- R Registration Station
- S Sanitation Station
- T Toilet / Shower
- V Vault Toilet
- C Campground
- B Boat Launch
- P Pavilion

Date: 4/26/2019

Beckett & Raeder

This project was directed by Deborah Jensen, Management Plan Administrator, Department of Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation Division with assistance from Beckett & Raeder, Inc.

PLAN APPROVALS:

Gerald A. Olsen
Chief, Parks & Recreation Division

William D. Dineen
Natural Resources Deputy

[Signature]
Director, Department of Natural Resources

5/8/19
Date

5/9/19
Date

6/4/19
Date

PLAN APPROVALS

PLAN APPROVAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following dates reference when the plans were presented for recommendation. In some instances, additional time was allotted for plan review following the presentation with subsequent approval received by email.

PRD- Section Chiefs	<u>1/7/2019</u> Date
DNR- Resource Management Bureau	<u>3/12/2019</u> Date
MSPAC- Stewardship Subcommittee	<u>3/19/2019</u> Date
NRC- Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee	<u>4/11/2019</u> Date

RESOLUTION NO. 04-2019-03**MICHIGAN STATE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSPAC)****RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE
“SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN”****ADOPTED: April 11, 2019**

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources’ (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division has completed the General Management Plan for South Higgins Lake State Park; and

WHEREAS, the planning process reflects sensitivity to natural resource values, historic and cultural resource values, recreation and education opportunities, and is inclusive of all DNR programs and representative of eco-management; and

WHEREAS, the planning process was further inclusive of stakeholder, constituent, and public input; and

WHEREAS, the General Management Plan represents sound guidance for future planning phases that will be consistent with the mission of the DNR and the Parks and Recreation Division, and reflective of the purpose and significance of South Higgins Lake State Park; and

WHEREAS, the General Management Plan is consistent with the recommendations of the Michigan State Parks and Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel report submitted to former Governor Rick Snyder; and

WHEREAS, the General Management Plan has been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Parks and Recreation Division and the MSPAC Stewardship Subcommittee.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee recommends approval of the South Higgins Lake State Park General Management Plan; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee further recommends that the DNR Director approve the General Management Plan for South Higgins Lake State Park;

Submitted by: MSPAC Stewardship Subcommittee

Motioned by: Commissioner Louise Klarr
Seconded by: Committee Member Tom Bailey

Yeas: 11
Nays: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: 3

This Resolution was adopted by the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee at their regular meeting on April 11, 2019 as Resolution No. 04-2019-03

TABLE OF CONTENTS

General Management Plan Executive Summary	1
Significance of South Higgins Lake State Park	2
Management Zones.....	2
Ten-Year Action Goals	4
Implementation Strategy.....	4
Chapter One: Core Values & Guiding Resources	5
1.1 Mission Statements	5
1.2 Guiding References	5
1.3 Summary of Legal Mandates	7
Chapter Two: Plan Process Overview	8
2.1 Planning Objectives	8
2.2 Planning Process	9
2.3 Planning Team	9
2.4 Summary of Input Opportunities	9
Chapter Three: Purpose and Significance	11
3.1 Park Purpose	11
3.2 Statements of Significance	11
3.3 Public Affirmation of Significance.....	13
3.4 Community Connection.....	13
Chapter Four: Management Zones.....	14
4.1 Primitive Zone	17
4.2 Backcountry Zone	18
4.3 Developed Recreation Zone	19
4.4 Administrative Services Zone	20
Chapter Five: Ten-Year Action Goals.....	21
Chapter Six: Implementation Strategy	24
6.1 Implementation Toolbox	24
6.2 Documentation of Changes	25
6.3 Documentation of Accomplishments	25
6.4 Five-Year Review Process.....	25

Appendix A: Supporting Analysis	26
A.1 Park Setting	26
A.2 Demographics	27
A.3 Regional Recreation Resources	28
A.4 History of South Higgins Lake State Park.....	34
A.5 Land Ownership	35
A.6 Legal Mandates	36
A.7 Landscape Context and Natural	39
Resources	39
A.8 Recreation Resources.....	41
A.9 Historic and Cultural Resources	43
A.10 Programming and Events	43
A.11 Park Use Statistics	44
Appendix B: Public and Stakeholder Input	57
B.1 Project Website	57
B.2 Online Public Survey.....	57
B.3 Public Input Survey Results	75
B.4 Summary of Stakeholder Input Workshop	133
B.5 Tribal Communication	137
B.6 Summary of Draft Plan Public Input	139
B.7 Response to Public Input Comments	169



Boating on Higgins Lake

General Management Plan Executive Summary

South Higgins Lake State Park, a 1,364-acre park situated on one mile of shoreline of the picturesque Higgins Lake, boasts one of the largest Michigan state park campgrounds, four designated swimming beaches and a popular boat launch. In addition, it features the quiet and shallow Marl Lake completely within the park boundary and surrounded by wooded trails.

The purpose of this general management plan (GMP) is to guide the future long-term management of South Higgins Lake State Park. Overall, this plan seeks to uphold the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks & Recreation Division's (PRD) Mission: "to acquire, protect, and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan's unique resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities." The management plan brings together DNR staff, stakeholders, and the public into a process that defines the following for the state park:

- Purpose and significance that captures the unique identity of South Higgins Lake State Park
- Twenty-year management zone plan reflecting the resource protection goals and level of development appropriate for different areas of the park
- Ten-year action goals that address the desired future condition within the park as a whole and within each of the designated management zones

The supporting analysis, included as Appendix A of this plan, provides important background information on South Higgins Lake State Park that informs this planning initiative. It includes a comprehensive review of the park setting, area demographics, history, land ownership, legal mandates, and cultural, natural, and recreation resources. Furthermore, several existing planning documents, including the Michigan State Parks Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel Report, the Managed Public Lands Strategy, and the Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan were used as guiding references (see chapter one).

Significance of South Higgins Lake State Park

This general management plan (GMP) developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks & Recreation Division (PRD) is derived from the property's significant features that make it distinct from other parks in the state's system. South Higgins Lake State Park was determined significant due to the aspects that follow below in summary form. The full statements of significance can be found in chapter three.

- The renowned natural beauty and abundant recreation opportunities have made the Higgins Lake area a popular resort destination since the 1870s.
- Extensive shoreline on two lakes with divergent characteristics provide a wide array of water recreation offerings.
- The park's heavily-used boat launch on Higgins Lake offers amenities to boaters, including a protected launch basin, day-mooring and boat wash.
- The park's campground is the second largest in the state park system and includes traditional sites, full hook-up sites, and a mini-cabin.
- South Higgins Lake State Park has provided visitors with a quintessential northern Michigan experience since 1927, with recent upgrades providing present-day visitors with modern camping amenities.
- Diverse and abundant programs and events provide activities for campers and attract visitors throughout the summer and fall months.
- The park features 5.5 miles of primitive trails that connect to Markey Township Park, as well as heavily-used trails that run along the shoreline and have the potential for long-term regional connectivity.



Sitting by the Campfire

Management Zones

A key goal in the development of this general management plan is to continue to protect the park's natural and cultural resources, while providing recreation and education opportunities. Taking this into account, the planning team, with stakeholder and public input, established appropriate management zones for the park from a palette of nine standard zones. The management zone plan and a thorough review of each management zone are found in Chapter 4 of this plan. A condensed description of each of the applied management zones is as follows:

Primitive Zone

This zone reflects a desired condition that emphasizes the natural resources. It is managed to allow only dispersed and low frequency use for low impact recreational purposes. The primitive zone covers approximately 21% of the park and includes undeveloped wetland areas north of Marl Lake and the Cut River.

Backcountry Zone

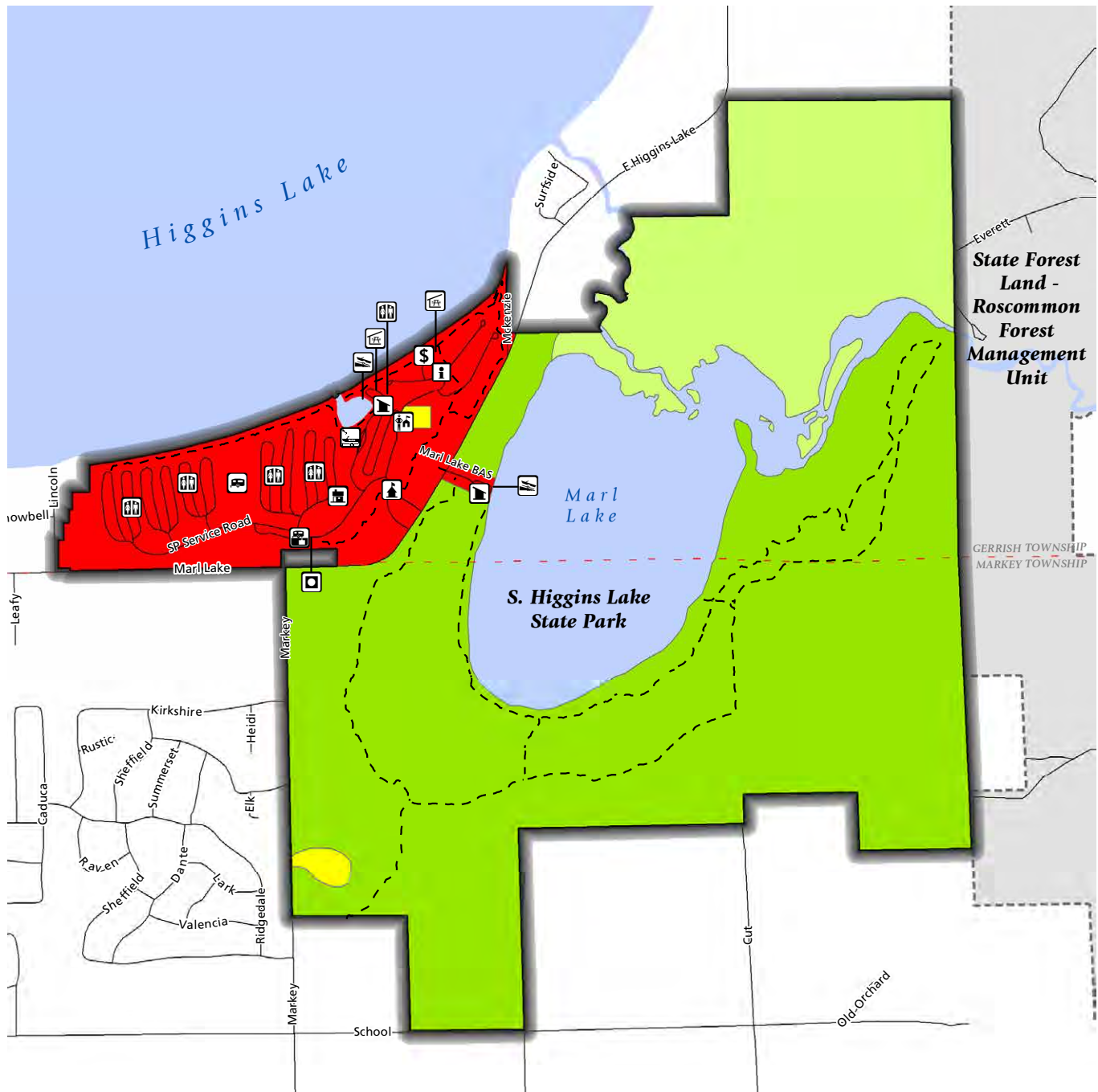
The character of this zone is natural, with minimal evidence of human impact. This zone allows for increased use, including non-motorized trails and low-impact modifications of the landscape to accommodate that use. The backcountry zone comprises approximately 63% of the park and includes the majority of the park area to the east of Higgins Lake Road, south of the Cut River and contains the foot trails that weave through that area of the park.

Developed Recreation Zone

This zone allows active recreation with high density of use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource emphasis. In this zone, recreation dominates with natural resource attributes enhanced as possible. The developed recreation zone is approximately 16% of the park and includes the park's large campground area, the sanitation station, the day-use area and beach, concession building, the Higgins Lake boat launch and associated amenities (boat basin, boat wash, and parking), picnic pavilions, and the Marl Lake boat launch and parking area.

Administrative Services Zone

This zone encompasses areas required for the administration and operations of the park. It makes up 1% of the park, and includes the park headquarters, maintenance facilities, and storage yard.



S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Management Zones

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Date: 4/26/2019

- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- Trails

Management Zones:

- Administrative Services
- Primitive
- Backcountry
- Developed Recreation

- Concession/Store
- Contact Station
- Headquarters
- Informational
- Mini Cabin
- Pavilion
- Boat Wash

- Registration Station
- Sanitation Station
- Toilet / Shower
- Vault Toilet
- Campground
- Boat Launch
- Pavilion

B R i
Beckett & Raeder

Ten-Year Action Goals

Once the planning team has established management zones to guide South Higgins Lake State Park (SHLSP) for the next 20 years, a series of action goals are identified. The planning team has determined these actions as the items that can be accomplished in the next ten years. The action goals are broken down into categories pertaining either to an area of park infrastructure and facilities or management, operations and planning. Below is a summary of the action goals for the park. The full list of ten-year action goals can be found in chapter five.

Park Infrastructure and Facilities

Action goals related to the park's infrastructure or facilities include maintaining the historic concession building, improving trails at Marl Lake and throughout the park, improving accessibility of the beach, creating additional overnight accommodations with modern cabins, and additional recreation opportunities such as an accessible fishing pier/kayak launch at Marl Lake, a basketball court in the day-use area, and a shelter for program and rental use near the ballfield.

Management, Operations, and Planning

Action goals related to the management, operations, and planning of the park include completing a stewardship plan for the park, planning for the maintenance and renovation of the concession building, exploring options for adding Wi-Fi service to the park, exploring partnership opportunities for a new playground, and acquiring parcels within the project boundary. The park staff will also continue trail coordination efforts with local communities.

Implementation Strategy

The final chapter of this general management plan includes guidance for implementation of the action goals and maintaining the plan so it remains relevant in the long term. The guidelines also help the park align the action goals with the park, district, and statewide annual funding processes and annual tasks. It is the primary responsibility of the Unit Supervisor/Manager to oversee implementation of the plan.

The implementation strategy provides a toolbox of strategies to consider when reviewing and prioritizing the implementation of action goals, guidance on documenting changes within the park since the approval of the general management plan, instruction for documenting accomplishments as action goals are completed, and the five-year review process.



Kayaking on Higgins Lake



Deer by the Park Entrance Sign

Chapter One: Core Values & Guiding Resources

1.1 Mission Statements

Throughout the planning process, the core values of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was the foundation of the planning team's decisions. These include the mission statement of the DNR, the five goals of the DNR, and the DNR Parks & Recreation Division (PRD). These values set the protection of natural and cultural resources and the provision of recreational and educational opportunities at the forefront of the plan.

DNR Mission Statement

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use, and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.

Five Goals of the DNR

1. Protect the natural and cultural resources
2. Ensure sustainable recreation use and enjoyment
3. Enable strong natural resource-based economies
4. Improve and build strong relationships and partnerships
5. Foster effective business practices and good governance

PRD Mission Statement

The Parks & Recreation Division's mission is to acquire, protect, and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan's unique resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities.

1.2 Guiding References

The general management planning process is guided and shaped by several resources developed to provide recommendations for managing Michigan's parks and recreation system. In particular, these resources have helped shape the 10-year action goals established in this plan.

Michigan State Parks & Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel Report (2012)

The Blue Ribbon Panel's report to Governor Snyder identifies a number of recommendations for system-wide changes to programs, management, infrastructure type, and investment strategies that set up the visionary framework for the next 30-50 years of park and outdoor recreation management in Michigan. Recommendations in the report include:

- Identify and protect important natural, cultural, historic, and prehistoric resources

- Diversify funding
- Prioritize development of statewide and regional systems of connected trail networks
- Connections between communities and their recreational assets to strengthen regional identities
- Integrate tourism and economic development marketing
- Prioritize investment in parks and recreation



Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2018-2022 (SCORP)

SCORP is a five-year strategic plan that shapes investment by the state and local communities in priority outdoor recreation infrastructure and programming. The Plan's overarching goal is to "Protect and manage Michigan's diverse and abundant natural and cultural assets to provide relevant, quality experiences that meet the fun, relaxation, and health needs of Michigan's residents and visitors, and support economic prosperity" by meeting the following objectives:

- Foster stewardship and conservation
- Improve collaboration
- Raise awareness
- Improve recreational access
- Provide quality experiences
- Enhance health benefits
- Enhance prosperity

Michigan Comprehensive Trail Plan (2013 - 2018)

The Trail Plan, developed by an 11-member committee appointed by Governor Snyder, includes eight priority recommendations with associated key actions that should be implemented to assist in achieving the vision of establishing a high quality, nationally-recognized, state-wide trail system. The eight recommendations are as follows:

- Trails are maintained to ensure a sustainable and quality trail system
- Expand trails, trail experiences, opportunities to ensure accessibility to trail systems, outdoor recreation opportunities, and natural and cultural resources
- The Michigan Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council leads the effort to maintain and enhance Michigan's reputation as the trail state
- Link trails, trail users and adjoining towns to create memorable trail experiences and enhance economic prosperity
- Develop, enhance and celebrate partnerships and collaborations
- Implement a marketing plan including an electronic portal that allows citizens and visitors to be aware of all trails and related amenities
- Develop funding sources and mechanisms for trail maintenance, acquisition and development
- Ensure that the state's trail system compliments other plans and planning efforts



Michigan Comprehensive Trail Plan Cover

Managed Public Land Strategy (2013)

- The DNR-Managed Public Land Strategy provides a framework for the continued conservation, use, and management of public lands to provide an enhanced quality of life for Michigan residents, create jobs, and protect the essence of Michigan: its woods, waters, wildlife, and other natural and cultural assets. The Strategy identifies three broad goals with desired outcomes, metrics, and measurable objectives for each. These goals are to:
- Provide quality outdoor public recreation opportunities
- Foster regional economic prosperity
- Protect natural and cultural resources for future generations

PRD Strategic Plan (2017-2022)

The PRD Strategic Plan is the overarching document that guides the Parks & Recreation Division in carrying out its mission. This plan establishes long-range goals, objectives, and strategies for Michigan's state parks and recreation system for the five-year period beginning in 2017. It identifies the most important issues facing the PRD and helps to define where resources should be focused for maximum benefit. The goals identified in the plan are:

- Be exemplary stewards of Michigan's natural and cultural resources
- Provide users with quality outdoor recreation experiences in balance with resource protection
- Continue to advance Michigan as the "Trail State"
- Provide a relevant gateway to connect people to nature and Michigan's cultural heritage, and foster understanding and support for PRD's mission among future generations
- Improve and maintain strong public, stakeholder and department communication, relationships and partnerships
- Engage in strategies to increase community and state economic prosperity
- Sustainably support PRD programs, operations, and facilities
- Foster and adopt effective and safe business practices



1.3 Summary of Legal Mandates

For all park general management plans, legal mandates are identified that serve to further guide the development of the plan, park management, and park operations. For the DNR's planning purposes, the term "Legal Mandates" refers to not only state law, but also the administrative tools of "Policy" and "Directive" of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and the Parks & Recreation Division. The general and site specific legal mandates applicable to South Higgins Lake State Park are listed in Appendix A: Supporting Analysis.

The legal mandates that most directly impact planning and management at South Higgins Lake State Park focus on the following areas:

- Federal- Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act
- Preservation of cultural and historic resources
- Water resources, wetlands, and inland streams protection
- Day-use area parking regulations
- Boat trailer parking and mooring regulations
- Local watercraft control
- Hunting area control
- Requirement for a Recreation Passport for entry into the park
- Public health code requirements for campgrounds, swimming areas, and swimmers' itch



Marl Lake
Shoreline

Chapter Two:

Plan Process Overview

2.1 Planning Objectives

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has developed master plans in the past for many of Michigan's state parks; however, most of these plans are now 20-40 years old and do not reflect today's realities or desires of recreational users. Furthermore, past plans put a strong emphasis on development and did not often include stewardship of natural and cultural features or opportunities for education and interpretation.

Development at South Higgins Lake State Park began with the development of 15 campsites on 100 acres of land and was improved through the efforts of the Civilian Conservation Corps, who planted trees and constructed several buildings. The park's popularity increased after World War II, and so the park was expanded and modernized over the years to a peak of 510 campsites and a boat basin. The addition of the Marl Lake property complemented the park with a trail system. Following years saw the enlargement of campsite size (and subsequent reduction in number of sites), new toilet and shower buildings, and upgraded electrical and water service. Recent park improvements include a new sanitation station, full hook-up campsites, a redesigned boat launch and parking area, a boat wash, road reconstruction, and an initial phase of a non-motorized trail.

General management planning sets out a framework for protecting park resources while providing for meaningful visitor experiences. The long-range vision and management objectives for South Higgins Lake State Park (SHLSP) are derived from the mission of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Parks & Recreation Division (PRD), the mission of applicable legal directives, the purpose of the park, and the park's significant natural and cultural resources.

The objective of the general management plan (GMP) is to bring together Parks & Recreation Division staff, staff from other resource divisions, stakeholders, and the public into a planning process that defines and clarifies the unique "Purpose and Significance" South Higgins Lake State Park. Collectively, those attributes will be reinforced in the planning and management decisions that impact the park through the implementation of the 20-year management zone plan used to guide park planning decisions and 10-year action goals that establish specific action strategies for the park as a whole and within each of the management zones. Each GMP is reviewed every five years to ensure there have been no major changes that would warrant a revision to the approved plan.

2.2 Planning Process

The SHLSP planning team met periodically over a 11 month period to develop the general management plan, beginning in November 2017 and ending in October 2018. Throughout the process, the team sought the input of the public and stakeholders to guide the decisions made in the plan. A stakeholder workshop was held in April 2018 to gather insight from organizations tied to the park. In addition, an online public input survey was available for interested parties to comment on their current use of the park and their priorities for the future. Following the input sessions and survey, the team developed a list of action plan priorities and developed the draft plan.

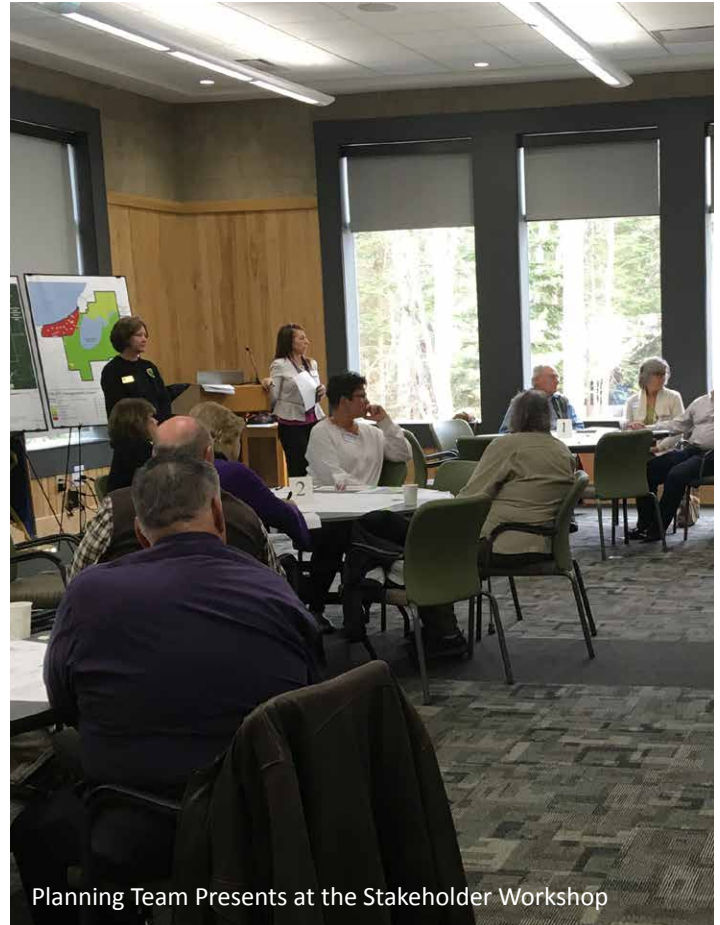
2.3 Planning Team

This plan was developed with the direct assistance, input, and expertise provided by all members of the planning team.

PLANNING TEAM		
DIVISION	TITLE	NAME
PRD	Management Plan Administrator	Debbie Jensen
PRD	Unit Supervisor	Rachel Roberts
PRD	District Supervisor	Bill Doan
PRD	Regional Planner	Scott Cook
PRD	Stewardship Unit Manager	Ray Fahlsing
PRD	N. Lower Trails Coordinator	Emily Meyerson / Greg Kinser
PRD	Trails Specialist	Amy Swainston
FD (Fisheries)	C. Lake Michigan Unit Manager	Scott Heintzelman
FD (Fisheries)	Fisheries Management Biologist	Mark Tonello
FRD (Forestry)	Roscommon Unit Manager	Steve Anderson
FRD (Forestry)	Forester	Dale Ekdom
LED (Law)	CO Supervisor (District 5)	Lt. Brandon Kieft
MOD (Marketing)	Park Interpreter	Craig Kasmer
OMM (Minerals)	Geologist	Peter Rose
WLD (Wildlife)	Wildlife Biologist	Mark Boersen

2.4 Summary of Input Opportunities

Public input is a critical part of the planning for South Higgins Lake State Park. Below is a summary of the public and stakeholder input methods that were used to inform the development of the general management plan. Several different methods were used to ensure everyone had an opportunity for input. Full reports for each of the outreach methods are included in Appendix B of this plan.



Planning Team Presents at the Stakeholder Workshop

Project Website

A public-facing website was maintained throughout the duration of the general management plan process. This website was updated with general information about the park and park maps, results of the public input survey, and the draft of the GMP. The website contained a contact form so that the public could contact the planning team at any time with questions, concerns, and input.

Stakeholder and Public Input Workshops

To gather targeted input from governmental, non-profit, and business/tourism entities, the planning team invited a group of stakeholders to participate in a facilitated input workshop held in April of 2018. This meeting was held jointly with North Higgins State Park, as the stakeholders were similar. The stakeholders were given a brief overview of the park and the general management planning process. The stakeholders were divided into small-table discussion groups, which completed a series of exercises describing the park's context, the park itself, opportunities for partnerships, the park's potential benefit to the larger community, and the stakeholders' vision for the park's future. Each table then reported out to the larger group.

Online Public Input Survey

One of the methods the planning team used to gather input from park users was an online survey. This online approach provides a convenient way for those who have access to the internet to provide feedback and accurately transfers all responses for analysis. However, it is not designed to be statistically representative of South Higgins Lake State Park users or uses, as respondents self-select. Nevertheless, the on-line survey does provide valuable information about what certain individuals or groups (those who are motivated to comment about the park, those likely to receive DNR communication about the survey, and those who have easy access to the internet) hope to see in the park's future management.

This survey was advertised through a press release and an email to those who have registered for the South Higgins Lake State Park overnight accommodations. Due to the survey advertisement to the camping reservation system email list, campers may be disproportionately represented in the responses as compared to day users.

Nine hundred and fifty-seven responses to the survey were collected. Of the 957 respondents, 925 (97%) reported that they have visited the park within the past five years. Those who had not recently visited the park were screened from the remainder of the survey. The survey included questions on what activities the visitors participate in during their visit, their thoughts on the day use and overnight park amenities, special events and programs, trails, fishing and hunting at the park, their overall satisfaction with their experience, and their demographic information.

Public Input Meeting

The DNR hosted a public input meeting to review the draft general management plan was held on September 24th, 2018,

at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center in Roscommon, Michigan. This meeting held jointly with the North Higgins Lake State Park General Management Plan process as the interested parties would have considerable overlap. The general public was notified about the meeting through a press release, internet postings, and email notifications. A total of 35 attendees were recorded on sign-in sheets.

The meeting included an overview of the general management plan process and plan contents, followed by an opportunity to provide input on the statements of significance, draft management zones, and ten-year action goals. Participants had the opportunity to affix comments directly onto the presentation boards, record comments on flip charts, and complete a comment sheet, as well as converse with planning team members. In addition, participants were given six dots for each park to prioritize their preferred actions from the ten-year action goals. Two copies of the complete draft general management plan were available to review.

Primary changes in response to the comments are as follows:

- Information about current terrestrial and aquatic invasive species was added to the supporting analysis.
- The action goal relating to adding electrical service for overnight boat camping was removed.

Tribal Communication

The department's Tribal Coordinator reached out to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians, the Gun Lake Band of Pottawatomi Indians, the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians, and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe with a letter notifying them of the general management plan process and timeline and asking for any input.





Sailboats on the Shore of Higgins Lake

Chapter Three: Purpose and Significance

3.1 Park Purpose

Park purpose statements are based on park legislation, legislative history, special designations and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) policies. These statements reaffirm the reasons for which South Higgins Lake State Park was included as part of the state park system.

- To be used as a public park, for the purposes of public recreation or the preservation of natural beauty or historic association in accordance with Act 218, Public Acts of 1919 that created the Michigan State Park Commission.
- To provide access to land and water based public recreational opportunities, meeting the demand for access to and camping on Higgins Lake.
- To preserve and protect South Higgins Lake State Park's unique natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.
- To provide educational and interpretive opportunities for the public that reflects the DNR mission and the unique qualities of South Higgins Lake State Park.

3.2 Statements of Significance

This general management plan developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) is derived from the park's significant features that make it distinct from other parks in the state's system. South Higgins Lake State Park was determined significant due to the following:

Outdoor Recreation Destination

South Higgins Lake State Park is located on the shores of Higgins Lake in an area that has been enjoyed as a resort destination since the 1870s. The lake and surrounding area are renowned for stunning natural beauty, easy accessibility from two interstate highways, and a wealth of family-friendly recreation opportunities, including abundant nearby state forest land.

Diverse Water Recreation Opportunities

South Higgins Lake State Park has an array of water recreation offerings with access on both Higgins Lake and Marl Lake. The large size and deep spring-fed water of Higgins Lake is popular for fishing and recreational boating. In contrast, Marl Lake's shallow and calm waters provide a quiet, natural setting for non-motorized and electric motor boats. The Cut

River connects the two lakes, creating an interesting paddling experience. Nearly a mile of shoreline on Higgins Lake within the park includes four designated swimming beaches and two pet-friendly areas by the water.

Boating Amenities

The heavily-used boat launch on Higgins Lake, with 180 trailer parking spaces and a reservable shelter, features a protected boating access site known as the boat basin, unusual for an inland lake. Temporary mooring is available to campers for the duration of their stay, as well as to day users. A boat wash is available to boaters to help protect the lake ecosystem against the spread of invasive species. The park store rents stand-up paddle boards, canoes, kayaks, and pontoon boats to visitors.

Large Campground with Modern Amenities

The 400-site campground at South Higgins Lake State Park is the second largest in the Michigan state park system. It includes traditional sites, a limited number of full hook-up sites, and a mini-cabin. Due to the number of campsites in close proximity, large groups can enjoy camping together within a traditional campground setting.



Historic Concession Building

Modern and Historic

As one of the oldest state parks in Michigan, South Higgins Lake State Park has provided visitors with a quintessential northern Michigan experience since 1927. The park concession building, constructed in 1935, is still in use today as a large park general store with an attached pavilion available for daily rentals. It has retained enough historic integrity to be considered a historic structure by the DNR. The concession building and the park have seen many upgrades, including new restroom and shower buildings at the campground, providing present-day visitors with modern camping amenities.

Diverse Programming and Events

Diverse and abundant programs and events occur throughout the summer and fall months, such as the Explorer Guide Program and Halloween Fest. Collaboration with community groups allows for an ever-changing selection of programs in South Higgins Lake State Park. These programs and events provide activities for campers as well as attracting visitors to the park.

Park Trails

The addition in 1984 of nearly 700 acres of forested land surrounding Marl Lake provided an opportunity for 5.5 miles of primitive hiking/cross-country ski trails, which now link to the Markey Township park. These low-impact trails contrast with the heavily-used trails north of County Road 100 that run along the shoreline and connect the various facilities within the park, with the potential for long-term regional connectivity.



Cooking by the Campfire

3.3 Public Affirmation of Significance

Stakeholder and public input assisted the planning team with affirming the significant features and opportunities at South Higgins Lake State Park. The feedback from the online survey confirmed that the diverse programming and events, large and modern campground, and the various water recreation opportunities are key aspects of the park. Comments from survey respondents relating to those significant features are provided below.

"The outdoor haunted woods is always a hit. We love seeing how so many others decorate their campsite. Many of our friends that also live in the Higgins Lake/Roscommon area also camp during the Halloween weekend!"

"I like the variety of species and seasonal aspects of the lake."

"The beach is beautiful with trees and shallow water for young kids. It is one of the cleanest parks I've visited."

"It's a peaceful place for me and my dog to enjoy nature by walking through the park. Great kayaking lake."

"Restrooms are generally clean, campsites are large, modern, and clean."




3.4 Community Connection

The state park has hosted camping, recreation, and boating access on the picturesque Higgins Lake for generations. The park brings large numbers of visitors to the local area, not only to access the recreational opportunities at the park, but because the 400-site campground provides one of the few overnight accommodations in the vicinity. These visitors help provide economic impact to the community as they are guided to visit local businesses and attractions during their stay at the park.

The boat launch at South Higgins Lake State Park is popular with campers and day-users, as it offers the community a unique protected launch site in the boat basin. In addition, the park has worked with partners to create a boat wash as a method of aquatic invasive species prevention, helping to maintain the water quality of Higgins Lake, the community's central asset.



Decorations for Halloween Fest

MANAGEMENT ZONE PROGRESSION			
MANAGEMENT ZONE	RESOURCE CONDITION	VISITOR EXPERIENCE	DEVELOPMENT LEVEL
ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE	Pristine	Restricted	None
PRIMITIVE			
BACKCOUNTRY			
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE			
HISTORY EDUCATION			
SCENIC			
NATURAL RESOURCE RECREATION			
DEVELOPED RECREATION			
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	Active Management	Significant Use	Extensive Development

Chapter Four: Management Zones

The 20-year Management Zone Plan was developed in keeping with the park's purpose and significance. The primary goal in the development of the management zones is to protect and enhance the park's natural and cultural resources while also supporting outdoor recreation opportunities at the park. From a palette of nine management zones, the planning team studied the park and applied zones that best fit each area of the park. Management zones describe a variety of activities that may be appropriate within the zone and address the desired future condition for the following categories:

- Natural resources
- Historic/cultural Resources
- Recreation opportunities
- Education/interpretation opportunities
- Visitor experience
- Management focus

The resource condition, visitor experience, and development level vary in each of the nine standard zones, as indicated in the figure above. South Higgins Lake State Park was divided into the following four zones:

- Primitive zone
- Backcountry zone
- Developed recreation zone
- Administrative services zone

Project Boundary

A project boundary is a geographic area in which the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is seeking to acquire property that supports the mission of the DNR. Property is acquired on a willing buyer/willing seller basis. During the general management planning process, the planning team recommended a proposed project boundary for South Higgins Lake State Park that encompassed neighboring land possessing natural, cultural resource and/or recreational value to complement the existing park land. The proposed project boundary includes parcels that the DNR would seek to acquire in order to consolidate ownership and provide clear boundary delineation and ease of access and management (such as provided by road corridors). The planning team determined that already-developed private land adjacent to the west park boundary should be removed from the project boundary. The proposed project boundary also includes land should be removed from the Forest Resources Division (FRD) project boundary as it is currently administered by the Parks and Recreation Division. Land proposed to be added to the project boundary would provide improved direct access to the Cut River and land to the north. Included within the Project Boundary is a 26 acre parcel owned by the Higgins Lake Watershed Conservancy, reflecting the desire that this land should stay in a protected status, either under Conservancy or DNR management.

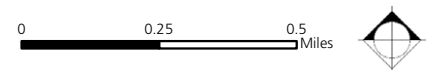
The current South Higgins Lake State Park boundary and the proposed project boundary are illustrated on the Proposed Project Boundary map that follows.



S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Proposed Project Boundary

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, ESRI Basemap



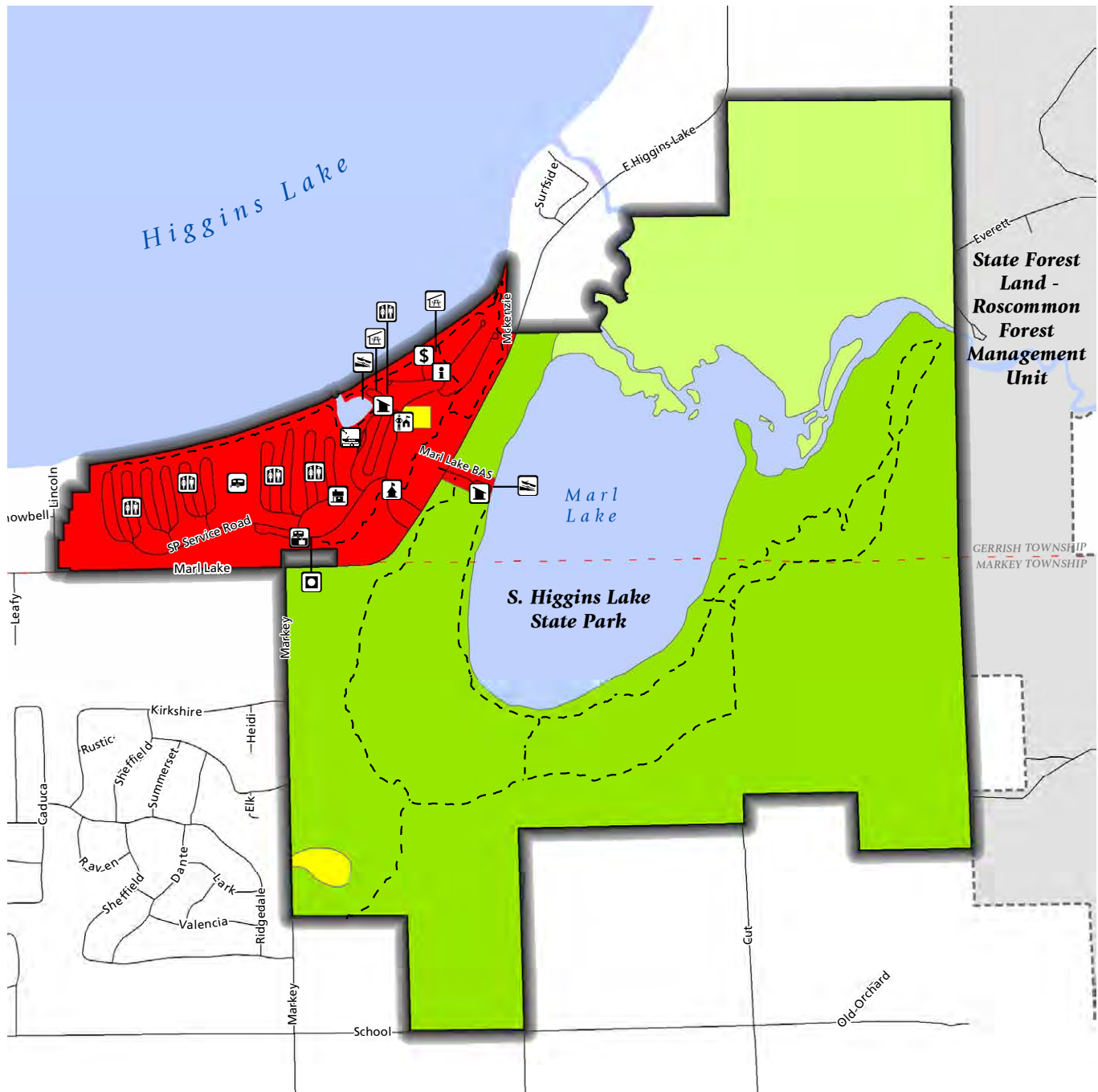
Date: 8/6/2018

- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- GMP Proposed Project Boundary*
- NRC 2004 Approved State Park Project Boundary*
- Roscommon Forest Unit
- Municipal Boundaries
- Area recommended to be added to

- Area to be added to PRD Project Boundary and removed from FRD Project Boundary (currently administered by PRD)

- Area recommended to be removed from the NRC Approved Project Boundary

*A Project Boundary is a geographic area in which the DNR is seeking to acquire property that supports the mission of the DNR on a willing buyer / willing seller basis



S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Management Zones

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Date: 4/26/2019

- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- Trails

Management Zones:

- Administrative Services
- Primitive
- Backcountry
- Developed Recreation

- Concession/Store
- Contact Station
- Headquarters
- Informational
- Mini Cabin
- Pavilion
- Boat Wash

- Registration Station
- Sanitation Station
- Toilet / Shower
- Vault Toilet
- Campground
- Boat Launch
- Pavilion

B R i
Beckett & Raeder

4.1 Primitive Zone

The primitive zone reflects a desired condition that emphasizes the natural resources and is managed to only allow dispersed and low frequency use in the zone for low impact recreational purposes. Attaining and maintaining a high quality natural resource condition dictates the extent to which recreational improvements or uses are allowed. The primitive zone covers 231 acres (approximately 21% of the park) and includes undeveloped wetland areas north of Marl Lake and the Cut River.

Natural Resources

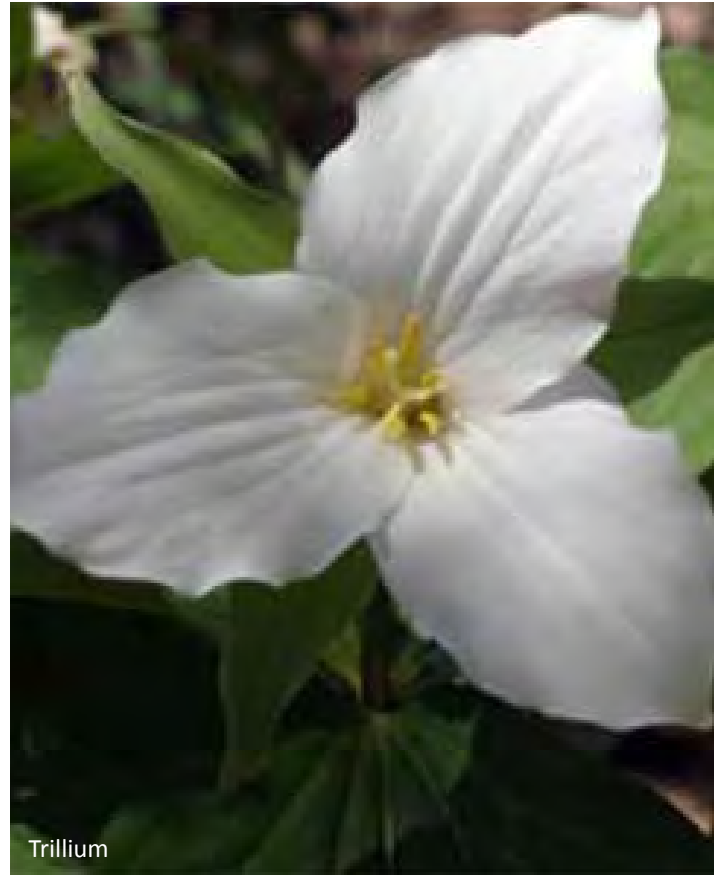
Native species and natural processes take precedence over visitor accommodation in this zone. Native Michigan natural communities/ecosystem components and processes are maintained, restored, and protected, and human-caused habitat fragmentation is eliminated. The Stewardship Plan will determine the appropriate habitat management for the park.

Historic/Cultural Resources

There are several recorded archaeological sites within the park and there is high potential for new prehistoric sites to be found. Cultural resources may be actively preserved or allowed to molder.

Recreation Opportunities

This zone allows dispersed, low density, off-trail or trailed, self-reliant (no bicycle or equestrian use) outdoor activities (e.g., hiking, backpacking, cross-country skiing, hunting/trapping, fishing, nature observation).



Trillium

Education Opportunities

Education opportunities for this zone are primarily off-site. Interpretive signage is allowed at trailheads and with low frequency on trails and at overlooks.

Visitor Experience

The visitor can expect a low frequency of encounters with other visitors. Visitors are engaged in high solitude, off-trail or trailed outdoor activities. This zone requires a higher time commitment, and high levels of challenge and adventure. It is considered a “discovery” area with minimal on-site interpretation. The noise tolerance in this zone is low, and visitors can expect low interaction with DNR staff.

Management Focus

The focus is to maintain the low-impact character of this zone, with an emphasis on natural resource quality.

Development

This zone maintains a very low level of development for visitor accommodation (e.g., foot trails). Site hardening is only allowed to protect sensitive resources (e.g., boardwalk). There should be little evidence of human activity in this zone. This zone is currently undeveloped and is primarily wetlands.



A Pair of Mallards

4.2 Backcountry Zone

The character of the backcountry zone is natural, with minimal evidence of human impact through recreational use. While the primitive zone is highly restrictive for recreational use and human impact, this zone allows for increased use and may include modifications of the landscape, such as trail development, to accommodate that use. This zone is comprised of 702 acres (approximately 63% of the park) and includes the majority of the park area to the east of Higgins Lake Road, south of the Cut River and the foot trails that weave through that area of the park.

Natural Resources

Natural resources may be modified slightly to support visitor use, but tolerance for natural resource impacts is typically low. Native Michigan natural communities/ecosystem components and processes are maintained, restored, and protected, and human-caused habitat damage is repaired.

Historic/Cultural Resources

There are several recorded archaeological sites within the park, and there is high potential for new prehistoric sites to be found.

Recreation Opportunities

Moderate levels of recreation (non-motorized) that are compatible with the natural character of the zone are allowed. Outdoor activities in diverse land and water natural settings, such as hiking, backpacking, bicycling, horseback riding, canoeing, kayaking, nature observation, cross-country

skiing, back-country camping, hunting/trapping, fishing, and snowshoeing, may be allowed in this zone. At South Higgins Lake State Park, this zone includes the majority of the park's trails, which are used for hiking, wildlife viewing, cross-country skiing, and hunting access.

Education Opportunities

Education opportunities such as interpretive signage at trailheads, on the trail, and at overlooks are allowed.

Visitor Experience

Moderate visitor encounters are accommodated in this zone. Visitors will be engaged in non-motorized outdoor activities. Moderate challenge and adventure should be expected, with low noise tolerance and interaction with DNR staff.

Management Focus

The management focus is to maintain the low-impact character of this zone, with an emphasis on natural resource quality.

Development

This zone may contain a low level of development to support visitor access to outdoor activities, such as trails, trailhead parking, designated backcountry campsites, pit toilets, and educational opportunities. Development shall be unobtrusive and blend with the natural environment. Site hardening, such as boardwalks, fencing, and pedestrian paths, may be necessary to protect sensitive resources.



Kayaking at Marl Lake

4.3 Developed Recreation Zone

This zone allows active recreation with high density of use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource significance. In this zone, recreation dominates with natural resource attributes enhanced as possible. This zone is 181 acres (approximately 16% of the park land) and includes the park's large campground area, the sanitation station, the day-use area, beaches, concession building, the Higgins Lake boat launch and associated amenities (boat basin, boat wash, and parking), picnic pavilions, and the Marl Lake boat launch and parking area.

Natural Resources

Natural resources may be actively managed and modified to support visitor activities. Vegetative management in this zone will facilitate development and recreational use and maintain an aesthetically appealing landscape.

Historic/Cultural Resources

The concession building is within this zone and is considered by PRD to be a historic structure. The building may continue to be preserved, restored, or rehabilitated to support visitor activities. Cultural resources may also be present in this zone and, if discovered, may be actively preserved or allowed to molder.

Recreation Opportunities

High levels of recreation in a highly structured environment may be permitted in this zone, including bicycle, equestrian, and snowmobile use in designated areas as appropriate. Visitors may be engaged in recreation in diverse and modified land and water settings such as hiking, modern and semi-

modern camping, bicycling, boating, canoeing, kayaking, nature observation, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, swimming, picnicking, and other day-use activities.

Education Opportunities

Interpretive signage is encouraged at trail heads and at gathering areas such as the campground, registration station and day-use areas. Active programming may also be provided.

Visitor Experience

Visitors should expect a high frequency of encounters with other visitors and DNR staff. Visitors may be engaged in outdoor activities in diverse land and water settings for recreation and education. Activities in this zone may require a variable time commitment, variable levels of challenge and adventure, and low to moderate exertion. This zone has a high noise tolerance.

Management Focus

The management focus in this zone is to maintain use of the zone appropriate to the PRD mission, protect the park's resources, maintain public safety, effectively manage visitors, and provide universal access.

Development

A high level of development of facilities to support visitor activities is permitted in this zone, such as restrooms, walkways, boat launches, fishing piers, parking, campground facilities, trails, playgrounds, benches, picnic tables, and shelters for recreation and educational opportunities. Site hardening is allowed as necessary to facilitate activities, protect natural resources, and provide accessibility.



Aerial View of the Boat Launch and Basin



Park Headquarters Building

4.4 Administrative Services Zone

This zone encompasses the developed areas required for program administration and operations, such as the park headquarters, maintenance area, storage yards, and all related land base required to conduct the business of running the state park. This zone is 7 acres, or approximately 0.6% of the park.

Natural Resources

Natural resources may be actively managed and modified to facilitate administrative support activities. Vegetative management, primarily consisting of tree removal for safety, is allowed.

Historic/Cultural Resources

There are no known historic or cultural resources in this zone.

Recreation Opportunities

There are no recreational activities provided in this zone.

Education Opportunities

Person to person contact occurs at park headquarters for general information, both verbally and written (brochures, maps, etc.). Informational kiosks and other informational signage may be found in this zone.

Visitor Experience

The visitor experience in this zone is related to park business and information only. A high level of noise is tolerated in this zone.

Management Focus

The management focus in this zone is the business of running the park. This includes safety for employees, universal public access to the office, and providing appropriate facilities for staff, equipment, and materials.

Development

This zone supports a high level of development of facilities for support of park infrastructure and administrative activities, such as office space, meeting rooms, an employee locker room, employee seating area, shop space, storage space, and other related spaces. A high level of accessibility is expected.



South Higgins Lake State Park Campground

Chapter Five: Ten-Year Action Goals

The planning team has developed 10-year action goals that it believes are necessary to guide management and development within South Higgins Lake State Park (SHLSP) in order to achieve the desired resource protection and user experience. Action goals are recommended that address the following categories: natural resources, cultural resources, recreation opportunities, education/interpretation opportunities, and development. These goals apply either to the whole park or to specific locations within the park, as appropriate and according to the management zone. Refer to the zone descriptions in Chapter 4 for appropriate activities in each zone.

State park activities for the prevention, detection, and control of invasive species will be supported by Michigan's Invasive Species Program, which is a joint collaboration between the DNR, Department of Environmental Quality, and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. Information about the program can be found at www.michigan.gov/invasives. Park employees will continue to lower the risk of spreading aquatic and terrestrial invasive species to and from the park by following decontamination guidance, developing treatment plans, and educating park visitors about threats. Species on the state's Watch List will be the highest priority for state staff (Appendix A). The DNR will maintain collaboration

and communication about invasive species with local partners, such as the Northeast Michigan Cooperative Weed Management Area, the Higgins Lake Foundation, and the Higgins Lake Property Owners Association. Providing access to the park's natural resources while simultaneously protecting it from potential invaders is an important goal of the Parks and Recreation Division.

Management plans do not guarantee future funding to achieve the actions identified, but are based on funding realities and sound investment policies. PRD will seek internal funding, alternative funding sources, partnerships and other potential mechanisms for implementing the desired future conditions defined in this plan. On an annual basis, PRD districts determine priorities for project planning and project capital outlay. Each district's top projects are then evaluated at a state-wide level for available funds.

The following 10-year action goals are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as well as ease of implementation (cost, ability to implement with own staff, partnerships, etc.). Priority Level 1 projects indicate those that should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2 projects include those that should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years once funding has been identified.

TEN-YEAR ACTION GOALS

The following 10-year action goals are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as well as ease of implementation (cost, ability to implement with own staff, partnerships etc.). Priority Level 1 projects indicate those that should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2 projects include those that should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired, but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years, once funding has been identified. The bolded party within the Program Input column is the responsible program position.

MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS			
GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Continue to coordinate with local townships to create trail connections in the region as opportunities arise	Ongoing	All	Park Manager Trail Specialist
Continue to monitor for Oak Wilt and other forest pests	Ongoing	All	Park Manager Stewardship
Continue to explore options for the addition of Wi-Fi to the campground	Ongoing	Developed Recreation	Park Manager
Continue to explore land acquisition of properties within the GMP Proposed Project Boundary	Ongoing	All	Park Manager Lands Liaison
Continue to work proactively to develop and implement measures to prevent, detect and control aquatic and terrestrial invasive species	Ongoing	All	Park Manager Stewardship Aquatic Invasive Species Biologist Boating Program
Complete a Natural Resources Stewardship Plan for the park, identifying targets for conservation and related natural resource management strategies	1	All	Stewardship Ecologist
Explore opportunities to work with partners or secure grants to design and develop a new playground in the day-use area	2	Developed Recreation	Park Manager

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: CAPITAL OUTLAY			
GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Replace #1 toilet/ shower building with a FEMA certified shelter	1	Developed Recreation	Regional Planner Park Manager
Complete an engineering study of the Concession Building	1	Developed Recreation	Park Manager Stewardship
Replace the roof of the Concession Building considering the historic integrity	1	Developed Recreation	Regional Planner Park Manager Stewardship
Complete the paved regional trail connector through the park	2	Developed Recreation	Regional Planner Park Manager Trail Specialist
Construct modern cabins near the ballfield utilizing existing underground utilities	3	Developed Recreation	Regional Planner Park Manager
Construct a shelter at the ballfield for program use and rental	3	Developed Recreation	Regional Planner Park Manager
Construct a universally accessible fishing pier and canoe/ kayak launch at Marl Lake	3	Developed Recreation	Regional Planner Park Manager

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: SMALL PROJECTS			
GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Improve the accessibility of the beach area by implementing an accessible route to the Higgins Lake water's edge	1	Developed Recreation	Park Manager
Maintain existing boardwalk and construct additional boardwalk segments along the Marl Lake trails to protect the natural resources	1	Backcountry	Park Manager
Maintain the historic Concession Building by repairing and replacing logs as needed	1	Developed Recreation	Park Manager Stewardship
Repair existing day docks	1	Developed Recreation	Park Manager
Construct a basketball court in the day-use area	2	Developed Recreation	Park Manager



A Kayak Floats on Higgins Lake

Chapter Six:

Implementation Strategy

This chapter of the general management plan (GMP) provides guidance for implementation of the action goals and maintaining the plan so it remains relevant in the long term. These guidelines will also help the park align the action goals with park, district, and statewide annual funding processes and annual tasks outlined in the Parks and Recreation Division's Strategic Plan or other planning documents. Although the implementation of the GMP will require commitment from staff at every level, it will be the primary responsibility of the Unit Supervisor/Manager to oversee plan implementation.

A long-range plan such as this must maintain a degree of flexibility to be responsive to changing circumstances or opportunities that cannot be foreseen. It is recognized that some goals may be accomplished in a short time frame, while others may carry over through multiple years. It will be important to track progress so that the plan remains a relevant park management tool. The GMP will be reviewed every five years to ensure it remains viable.

6.1 Implementation Toolbox

The following is a list of items to consider when reviewing and prioritizing the implementation of action goals identified in the GMP.

Coordination/ Communication

- Meet regularly with the Regional Field Planner and District Supervisor to coordinate and prioritize large capital projects for capital outlay requests.
- Maintain an open dialogue with local partners and stakeholders to coordinate community-related projects as identified in the action goals.
- Follow-up regularly on progress for action goals that are not the primary responsibility of the Unit Supervisor/ Manager with the responsible program position.

Funding

- Identify estimated cost for each capital improvement/ infrastructure project, with assistance from Regional Field Planner or other planning and infrastructure section staff as needed.
- Identify potential funding sources for each project/task. Liaise with PRD grants coordinator as appropriate.
- Align potential funding sources with the annual "call for projects" in July for capital outlay funding requests.
- Review action goals list and determine which projects can be requested to receive District Small Project funding through the District Supervisor.

Scheduling

- Further prioritize projects based on need, funding, staffing and other constraints and opportunities.
- Incorporate project/task assignments into annual staff performance objectives.

6.2 Documentation of Changes

The Unit Supervisor/Manager should keep a record of any major changes to the park since approval of the GMP and note potential updates that may be required in the future. Documenting these changes will assist in the five-year plan review or when the GMP is updated. Changes may include:

- New user requests or conflicts
- Emerging recreation, funding or partnership opportunities
- Changes in land management
- Land transactions or changes to the Approved Project Boundary
- Major infrastructure projects or removal of structures

Changes may be documented by marking up the park's copy of the GMP or maintaining a log that is kept with it. In reviewing the action goals for changes, documentation should be provided for goals that may become irrelevant or are no longer viable, as well as proposed new action goals, including justification.

The management zoning map should also be reviewed regularly. Any proposed changes to the map related to land acquisition or disposal, errors in the original zoning, or land management changes should be documented. Note that the park zoning is intended to be a long-term document: changes will only be considered with adequate justification and are subject to a formal review and approval process.



Playing Volleyball at the Campground

6.3 Documentation of Accomplishments

As action goals are completed, the Unit Supervisor/Manager should mark them as such in the park's copy of the GMP, including the completion date. This will also help to maintain a log of accomplishments for district and division-wide reporting purposes, including PRD's strategic plan.

6.4 Five-Year Review Process

General management plans are reviewed every five years from the date of approval of either the Phase 2 plan or the complete GMP. The planning team for the five-year review is made up of the Park Management Plan Administrator, Unit Supervisor/Manager, Regional Field Planner and District Supervisor, with other team members included as may be necessary. A Five-Year Review Form will be used to record all changes to the plan within the past five years. Upon reviewing the GMP and the documented changes, the planning team will determine whether the changes warrant a complete update of the plan.

If there are no major changes required in either the zoning or the action goals, the planning team will complete the Five-Year Review Form and attach it as a supplement to the existing GMP. If zoning changes are needed, the GMP will be revised or updated following the complete GMP planning process led by the Park Management Plan Administrator. If changes to the action goals only are required, the Phase 2 GMP planning process will be implemented.



Bicycling on the Campground Path

PARK PROFILE	
AREA	1,364 Acres
COUNTY	Roscommon County
TOWNSHIP	Gerrish and Markey Township
LATITUDE	44.427883
LONGITUDE	-86.677723
ADDRESS	106 State Park Drive Roscommon MI, 48653
PHONE	989-821-6374



Appendix A: Supporting Analysis

A.1 Park Setting

South Higgins Lake State Park, on the south shore of Higgins Lake, features almost one mile of shoreline and provides 1,364 acres for recreation activities in a natural setting. Visitors can enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, fishing, boating, swimming, and cross-country skiing. Its modern campground is the second largest in the state system, offering 400 sites.

Location & Community

South Higgins Lake State Park is located in Roscommon County, approximately nine miles northeast of Houghton Lake. The area surrounding the park is rural countryside with dispersed small towns. The main entrance to the park is off East Higgins Lake Drive, which can be accessed via US-127 to the west and I-75 to the east.

Roscommon is about nine miles northeast of the park, providing restaurant and grocery options for park visitors. Higgins Lake has its own surrounding community of lake houses. The state park has its own park store, which provides rentals, basic grocery items, and camping, fishing, and beach supplies. Just south of Higgins Lake is Houghton Lake, where there are many more shopping and dining options and a more developed community around the lake.



South Higgins Lake State Park Location

A.2 Demographics

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that the 2010 population of Roscommon County was 24,449 and the 2015 estimate was 23,898, showing a slight decline. The overall population density of Roscommon County is 47.1 persons per square mile, compared to an average of 174.8 for the State of Michigan.

Roscommon County has a significantly higher percentage of people over 65 than the state, with a report of 28% in 2010. The majority of the population consists of high school graduates, and only 13.3% possess a bachelor's degree or higher compared to a state average of 26.4%. The county also has a lower median household income than the state and a higher percent of persons in poverty.

2010 U.S. CENSUS DATA FOR ROSCOMMON COUNTY		
POPULATION QUICKFACTS	ROSCOMMON CO.	MICHIGAN
Population estimates, July 1, 2015	23,898	9,922,576
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	24,449	9,883,640
Persons under 5 years, percent, April 1, 2010	3.9%	6.0%
Persons under 18 years, percent, April 1, 2010	16.1%	23.7%
Persons 65 years and over, percent, April 1, 2010	28%	13.8%
Female persons, percent, April 1, 2010	50.1%	50.9%
White alone, percent, April 1, 2010	97.3%	78.9%
Black or African American alone, percent, April 1, 2010	0.4%	14.2%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent, April 1, 2010	0.6%	0.6%
Asian alone, percent, April 1, 2010 (a)	0.2%	2.4%
Hispanic or Latino, percent, April 1, 2010	1.1%	4.4%
Veterans, 2010-2014	2,841	648,273
Foreign born persons, percent, 2010-2014	2.1%	6.2%
Persons per household, 2010-2014	2.02	2.52
Living in same house 1 year ago, % age 1 year+, 2010-2014	86%	85.3%
Language other than English spoken at home, % age 5 yrs+, 2010-2014	2.1%	9.1%
High school graduate or higher, % age 25 years+, 2010-2014	86%	89.3%
Bachelor's degree or higher, % age 25 years+, 2010-2014	13.3%	26.4%
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2010-2014	22.6	24.1
Median household income (in 2014 dollars), 2010-2014	33,540	49,087
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2014 dollars), 2010-2014	23,074	26,143
Persons in poverty, percent	20.7%	15.8%
Geography Quickfacts	Roscommon C.O	Michigan
Population per square mile, 2010	47.1	174.8
Land area in square miles, 2010	519.64	56538.90



Historic Higgins Lake Nursery at North Higgins Lake State Park

A.3 Regional Recreation Resources

South Higgins Lake State Park is situated in an area with a large amount of public land and associated recreation opportunities. State ownership accounts for 60% of the land in Roscommon County and 50% of the land in neighboring Crawford County. The following is a list of the primary recreational resources within a 30-mile radius of the park.

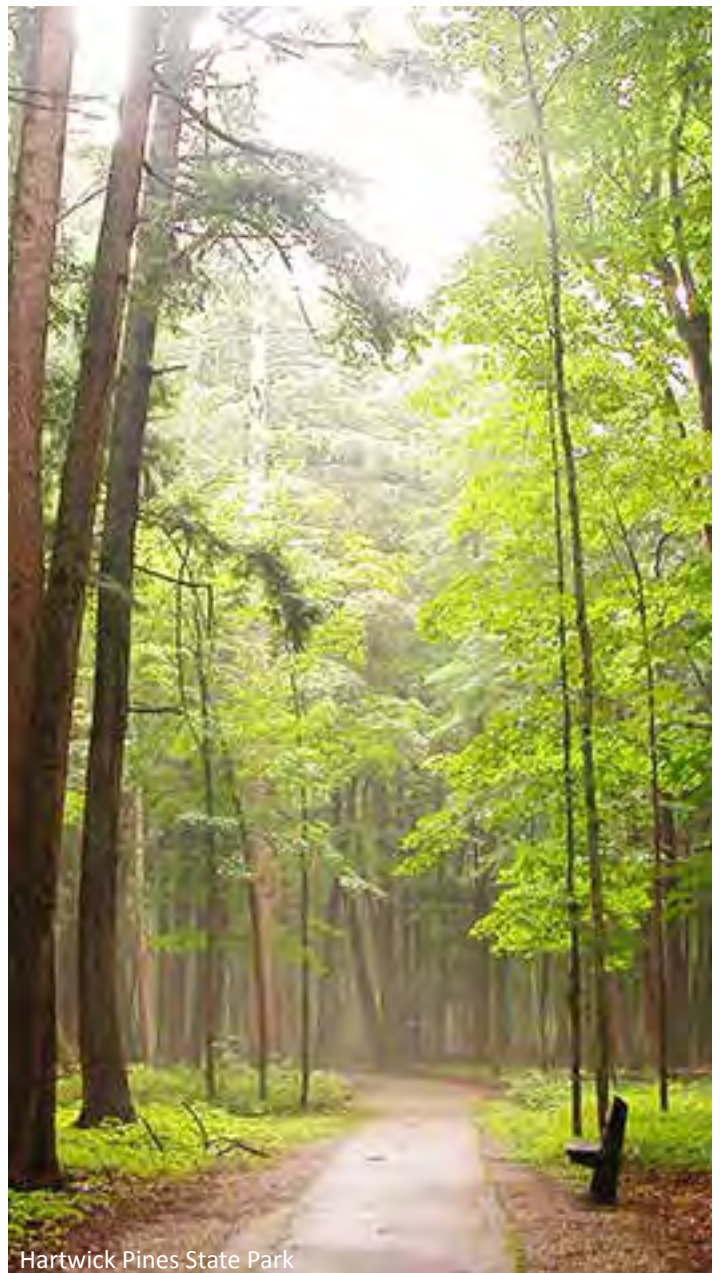
National Forest

- **Huron-Manistee National Forest** consists of two separate units, which were combined in 1945 for administrative purposes. The Huron National Forest portion is roughly ten miles northeast of South Higgins Lake State Park. It was established in 1909 and covers approximately 438,550 acres. The national forest has some unique features including nesting habitat for the threatened Kirtland's warbler. The forest also offers a number of lakes, streams, and rivers suitable for fishing and wildlife viewing. Visitors can camp throughout the forest in some areas without a fee (dispersed camping). Located 25 miles northeast of South Higgins Lake State Park, Wakeley Lake Area is a 2,000-acre tract of land with non-motorized access only for quiet recreation and wildlife viewing.

State Parks

- **North Higgins Lake State Park** is 12 miles north of South Higgins Lake State Park, along the northern shores of Higgins Lake. North Higgins Lake State Park is comprised of 449 acres and provides a modern campground, swimming beach, boat launch, and hiking and cross-country ski trails. The Historic Higgins Lake Nursery and Civilian Conservation Corps Museum is located within the park. It showcases the park system's past as well as remnants of the world-renowned tree nursery that was once located partially within the park boundary.

- **Hartwick Pines State Park** is about 32 miles north of South Higgins Lake State Park. This park is comprised of 9,762 acres and offers a rich, scenic area for recreational activities. The park features a 49-acre forest of old growth pines and a logging museum along with other recreational opportunities such as hiking, fishing, biking, wildlife viewing, and camping.
- **Wilson State Park** is about 28 miles south of South Higgins Lake State Park, situated on 36 wooded acres with a sandy beach on Budd Lake. The park was originally the site of the Wilson Brothers Sawmill and Company Store, which thrived in the late 1800s. The park features a mostly wooded campground with modern toilet facilities, generous picnic areas, a swimming beach, a metal detecting area, and tepee rental.



Hartwick Pines State Park

State Forest

Roscommon Forest Management Unit land surrounds South Higgins Lake State Park. This forest management area comprises 203,425 acres within Roscommon County, not including the state park. The forest contains many water resources for fishing, a number of campgrounds (see table below), and several trail systems for visitors to enjoy, including off-road vehicle (ORV) trails. The Mason Tract Pathway is another popular hiking and cross-country ski area within the state forest land. It is located 20 miles northeast of South Higgins Lake State Park and offers a 7.9-mile trail.

STATE FOREST CAMPGROUNDS NEAR SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK			
STATE FOREST CAMPGROUND	NUMBER OF SITES	AMENITIES	MANAGEMENT
Lake Margrethe	37	fishing, boat launch	Hartwick Pines State Park
Au Sable River Campground and Canoe Camp	15	fishing, accessible by water	Hartwick Pines State Park
Burton's Landing	12	fishing, boat launch, accessible by water	Hartwick Pines State Park
Keystone Landing	18	fishing, boat launch, accessible by water	Hartwick Pines State Park
Houghton Lake	50	fishing	North Higgins Lake State Park
Reedsburg Dam	47	fishing, boat launch, accessible by water	North Higgins Lake State Park
Canoe Harbor	45	fishing, carry-down launch, accessible by water, pathway access	North Higgins Lake State Park
House Lake	41	fishing, carry-down launch, pathway access	Wilson State Park
Trout Lake	35	fishing, boat launch, pathway access	Wilson State Park

State Wildlife/Game Areas

- **Backus Creek State Game Area** is 4,378 acres in size and is located about 20 miles southeast of South Higgins Lake State Park. This game area contains marshes, lakes, and forested areas which host a number of waterfowl species including wood duck, mallard, and scaup. Active habitat management also takes place for ruffed grouse, woodcock, white-tailed deer, and wild turkey.
- **Houghton Lake State Wildlife Research Area** consists of 12,069 acres of land for habitat management. It is located about 14 miles south of South Higgins Lake State Park. Species management is focused on white-tailed deer, wild turkey, ruffed grouse, and woodcock.
- **Wildlife Management Areas** managed by the Wildlife Division are located throughout the surrounding state forest. These areas are managed for a number of species including beaver, white-tailed deer, wild turkey, eastern massasauga rattlesnake, mallard, ruffed grouse, woodcock, and many others.
- **Gladwin Field Trial Area** is located just south of the Roscommon County line in Gladwin County. The 4,755 acres of the special managed area has a long history of creating habitat for featured game species of grouse, turkey, and deer. It is an important special use area for field trial events and dog training.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREAS IN THE VICINITY OF SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK	
NAME	PROXIMITY
Reedsburg Flooding State Wildlife Management Area	12 mi SW
Denton Creek Flooding State Wildlife Management Area	15 mi SE
Houghton Lake Flats North Flooding State Wildlife Management Area	9 mi SW
Houghton Lake Flats South Flooding State Wildlife Management Area	11 mi SW
Robinson Creek Flooding State Wildlife Management Area	9 mi W

State and Regional Trails

- **The Iron Belle Trail** is currently under development and, when complete, will be the longest state-designated trail in the nation. The trail plan includes a 1,273-mile hiking route and a 791-mile bicycle route. These trails run between Belle Isle Park in Detroit and Ironwood in the Upper Peninsula. The route of the biking trail runs just north of Higgins Lake and was recently completed through North Higgins Lake State Park.

STATE DESIGNATED PATHWAYS NEAR SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK

PATHWAY NAME	LENGTH	ACTIVITIES
Mason Tract	11.5 miles	hiking, groomed cross-country skiing
Tisdale Triangle	10.1 miles	hiking, groomed cross-country skiing
Red Pine Natural Area	1.5 miles	hiking
Lost Twin Lakes	3 miles	hiking
Trout Lake	2.7 miles	hiking

- **Snowmobile trails** are abundant in the area. Local snowmobile clubs provide maintenance and grooming on the designated trails in the region through grant agreements. There are roughly 253 miles of trails open to snowmobiling in a 30-mile radius of the park that are maintained by seven snowmobile clubs. Local and county ordinances permit operation of snowmobiles on the shoulder of roads in the county.

SNOWMOBILE CLUBS IN THE VICINITY OF SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK

SNOWMOBILE CLUB NAME	TOTAL MILES GROOMED BY SPONSOR
Rosco Higgins Trail Cruisers	39 miles
St. Helen Snow Packers	56 miles
Au Sable Valley Snow Groomers	110 miles
Houghton Lake Snow Groomers	107 miles
Greater Grayling Snowmobile Club	69 miles
Ogemaw Hills Snowmobile Club	99 miles
Missaukee Trailblazers	50 miles

- **The Shore-to-Shore Riding/Hiking Trail** is a 204-mile trail that stretches across the Lower Peninsula from Lake Huron to Lake Michigan. The trail runs north of Higgins Lake in Crawford County and is open to equestrian and hiking uses.
- **Midland to Mackinaw Trail** is a primitive, 210-mile trail starting near the Kawkawlin Flooding Dam in northern Midland County then traversing north to downtown Mackinaw City. It follows a series of trade routes used by American Indians. The trail is maintained by scouts from the Water and Woods Field Service Council (Boy Scouts of America) for hiking and other recreational uses. The trail runs just east of the Roscommon County and Crawford



County line near Meridian Road, about 31 miles from South Higgins Lake State Park.

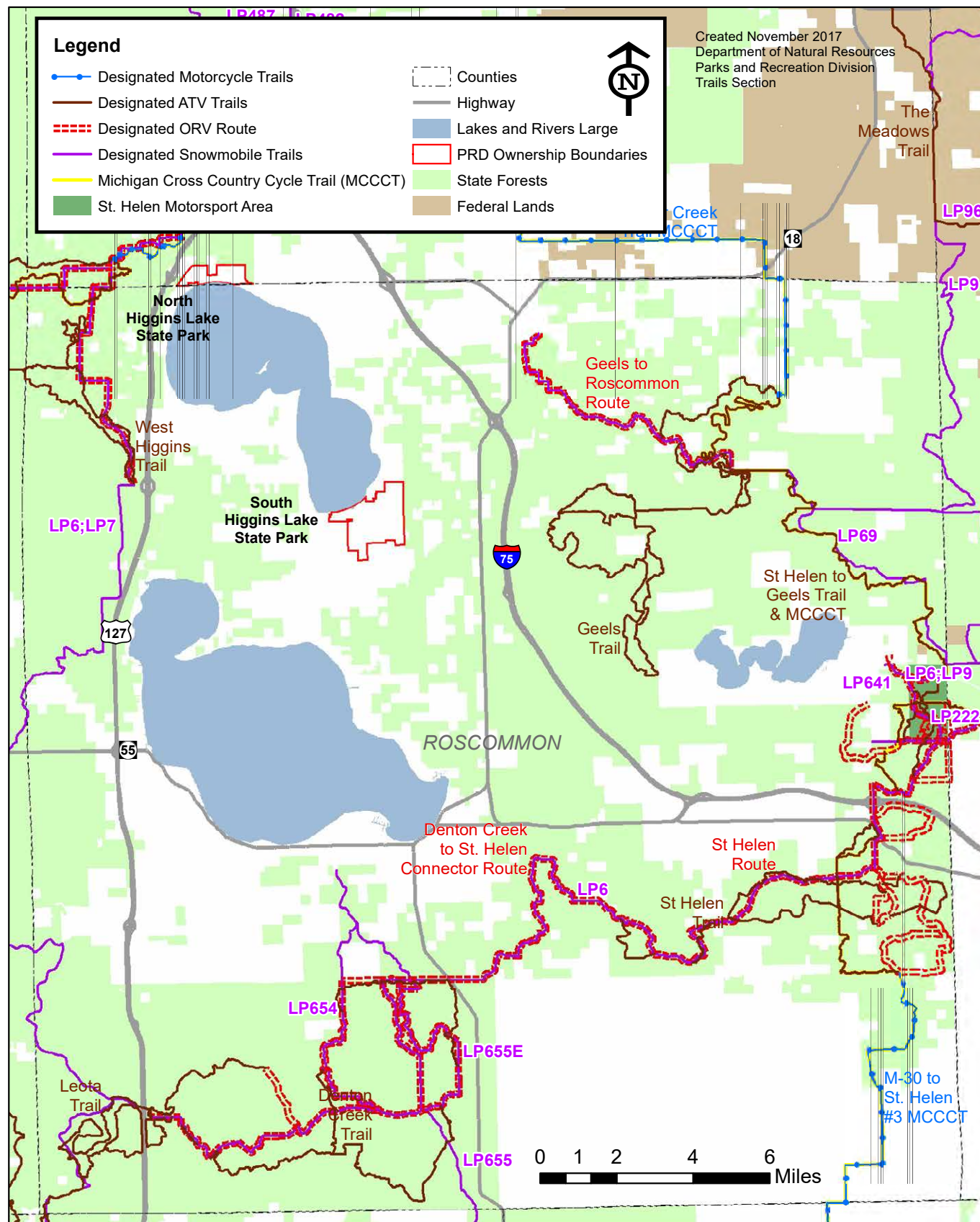
- **Off-road vehicle (ORV) trails** are located both east and south of South Higgins Lake State Park. The trails on the surrounding state and national forest land offer a wide variety of off-road recreation opportunities for off-road vehicles, ATV users, and motorcyclists (e.g., the Michigan Cross Country Cycle Trail). The St. Helen Motorsport Area lies near the Ogemaw and Roscommon county line, providing a unique opportunity for ORV enthusiasts for rock crawl and sand dune riding experiences. There are over 488 miles of designated trails within a 30-mile radius of South Higgins Lake State Park (see the table below). Roscommon County has opened the county roads to ORVs through Public Act 240 of 2008. Recent legislation has expanded the area available to ORVs by allowing operation on state forest roads (Public Act 288 of 2016). Over 6,376 miles of forest roads are in the process of being mapped and inventoried in the northern Lower Peninsula. Once the inventory is complete, online maps will be published for the public to reference the roads open to ORV use.

ORV TRAILS AND ROUTES NEAR SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK

ORV TRAIL NAME	TRAIL LENGTH
West Higgins Trail and Route	75 miles
Geels to Roscommon Route	10 miles
Geels Trail	53 miles
St. Helen to Geels Trail & MCCT	9 miles
St. Helen Trail & Route	79 miles
Denton Creek to St. Helen Route	9.5 miles
Denton Creek Trail & Route	62 miles

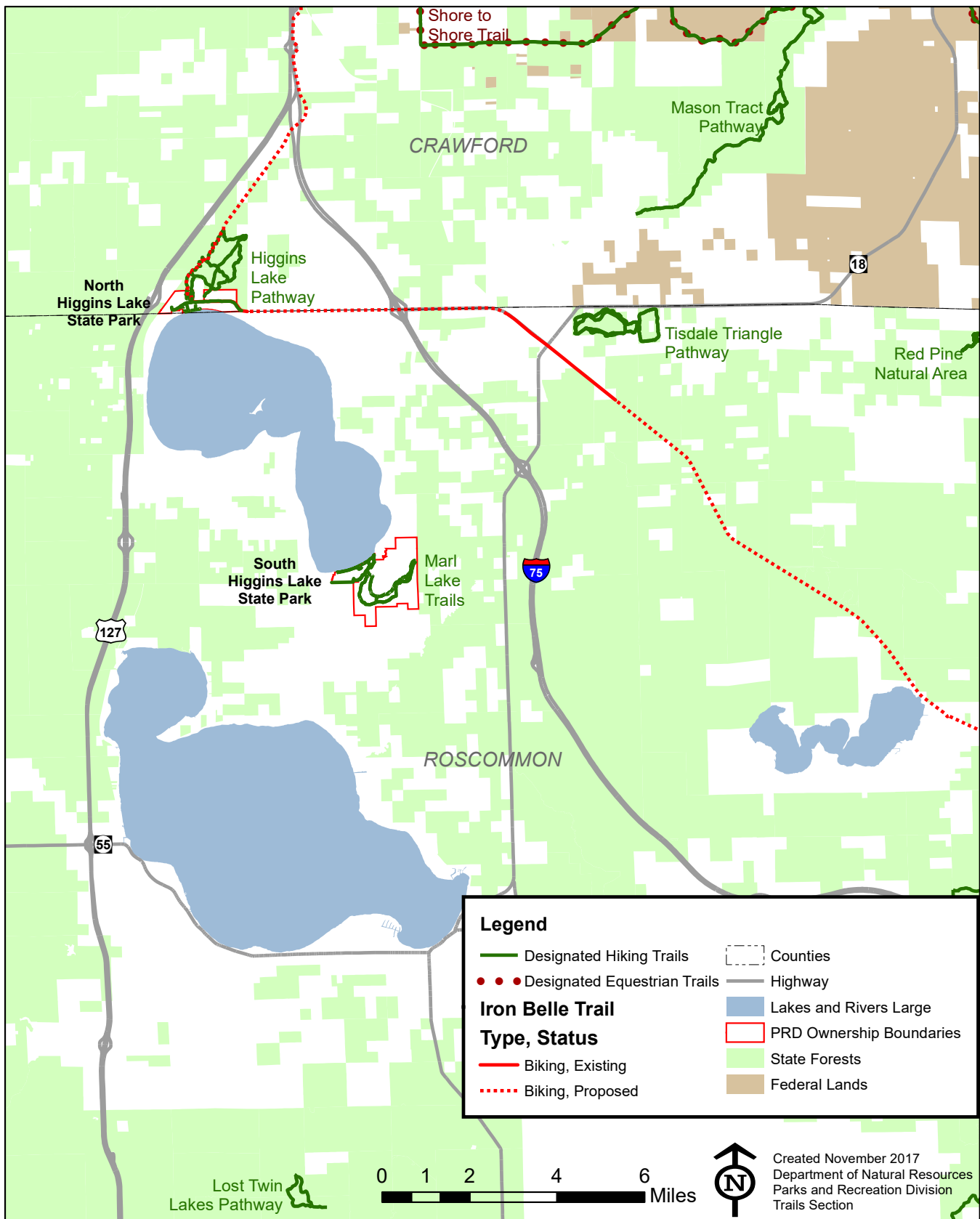


Motorized trails near South Higgins Lake State Park





Nonmotorized trails near South Higgins Lake State Park



Boating Access Sites

Below is a list of boating access sites (BAS) in close proximity to South Higgins Lake State Park, excluding those that are located within previously listed facilities such as state forest campgrounds.

NAME	WATER BODY	ADMINISTRATION	RAMP TYPE
Steckert Bridge	South Branch Au Sable	DNR – N.H.	gravel, 5 parking spaces
W. Higgins Lake	Higgins Lake	DNR – N.H.	paved, 82 parking spaces
Houghton Lake East	Houghton Lake	DNR – S.H.	paved, 42 parking spaces
Houghton Lake West	Houghton Lake	DNR – N.H.	paved, 89 parking spaces
South Houghton Lake	Houghton Lake	DNR – N.H.	paved, 153 parking spaces
Lake St. Helen	Lake St. Helen	Richfield Township	paved, 90 parking spaces
Meads Landing	South Branch Au Sable	DNR – N.H.	gravel, carry down
Chase Bridge	South Branch Au Sable	DNR – N.H.	gravel 5 parking spaces
Reedsburg Flooding	Muskegon River	DNR – N.H.	gravel, 15 parking spaces
Denton Township Park	Houghton Lake	Denton Township	paved, 24 Parking spaces
N.H. = North Higgins Lake State Park S.H. = South Higgins Lake State Park			

Water Recreation

Rivers

- **The Au Sable River** is a major tributary to Lake Huron. It drains a north-south basin that includes 1,932 square miles in north-central lower Michigan. The main stream of the river is near the confluence of Kolka and Bradford Creeks in Crawford County and is approximately 138 miles long. The river is utilized for leisure recreation, motorized and nonmotorized boats, and a 120-mile-long canoe race. It is noted for its scenery, recreational opportunities, cold-water fishery, and historic and cultural significance. Besides being classified as a natural river, several portions of the river and tributaries are designated Michigan Blue Ribbon Trout Streams, and 23 miles is designated as a National Wild and Scenic River. The Au Sable River was the write-in winner of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' 2015 "Michigan's Top Water Trails" contest.
- **The Muskegon River** begins in north-central Michigan from the drainage of Houghton Lake and incorporates over 2,350 square miles of land. The river is over 216 miles long and drains into Lake Michigan. As with most rivers, fishing, boating, canoe liveries, and camping are popular on and along the second largest river in the

state. It has a slower current than some of the other river systems in the area, making it enjoyable for beginner non-motorized recreation users. The southern portions near Big Rapids and the hydroelectric dams experience the greatest crowding between users.

- **Reedsburg Impoundment** was originally built in 1940s by the Civilian Conservation Corps out of lumber and then was upgraded to a concrete structure in 1938. It the last dam built on the main stream of the Muskegon River but it differs from the other dams due to its purpose promoting flooding for wildlife instead of producing hydroelectric power. The 1,000-acre impoundment is full of stumps that promote habitat for bluegills and northern pike. Visitors can camp along the shore at rustic campsites while fishing, waterfowl hunting, or boating.

Lakes

In addition to Higgins Lake, other major inland lakes in the area are:

- **Lake St. Helen** is a 2,400-acre all-sports lake with public access along the eastern shore. The public access site includes a fishing pier, an accessible kayak launch, and a swimming beach area. The lake is the headwaters for the South Branch of the Au Sable River.
- **Houghton Lake**, at 20,044 acres, is the largest inland lake in Michigan and one of the largest natural lakes in the world. The lake receives its water from Higgins Lake and the Cut River and is the headwaters of the Muskegon River. There are three DNR-designated boating access sites and several other community parks providing access. The all-sports lake is bordered by resort-style cottages and has a fishing community atmosphere. One of the most notable events is the annual winter carnival, Tip-Up-Town USA, which is held on two consecutive weekends in January and hosts various activities on the frozen lake surface. Local townships are working toward designating a water trail around the lake.

Municipal Parks and Recreation

Missaukee County Parks

- **Missaukee Lake Park** (33 acres) is located 25 miles southwest of the state park in Lake City. It offers a modern campground with 119 sites, beach access, day-use areas, a boat launch, and 80 boat slip rentals.
- **Crooked Lake Park** (60 acres) is located 28 miles southwest of the state park. The park provides several miles of hiking trails, modern and rustic camping options, day-use areas, and beach access.
- **Ben D Jeffs River Park** (66 acres) is located 14 miles south of the state park on M-55. This park serves as a day-use area and provides access to the Muskegon River via a canoe launch ramp.

Richfield Township Parks

- **Richfield Township Park** (135 acres) is located 14 miles east of the state park and includes a campground, ball

fields, restrooms, a pavilion, play equipment, and tennis courts.

Gerrish Township Parks

- **Gerrish Municipal Park** (25 acres) is located two miles north of the state park and includes a pavilion, picnic tables, grills, restroom facilities inside the Township Hall, tennis courts, children's play equipment, play fields, a basketball court, tetherball, and paved parking. An adjacent 20 acres of land to the west of the developed park was recently obtained from the State of Michigan for parks and recreation purposes.

Lyon Township Parks

- **Park 27** (31 acres) is located seven miles northwest of the state park and includes a dog park, trails, an ice rink, playground equipment, tennis courts, and pickleball courts.

Markey Township Parks

- **Markey Township Park** (31 acres) is located one mile south of the state park and includes a dog park, a pavilion, ball fields, a fitness path, playgrounds, and a zip line.

Roscommon Township Parks

- **Skinner Park** (37 acres) is nine miles southwest of the state park and offers softball fields, pavilions, a walking trail, a disc golf course, and soccer fields.

Land Conservancy

- **The Higgins Lake Land Conservancy**, a non-profit organization formed in 2001 to protect land within the Higgins Lake Watershed, purchased a 26 acre parcel of land in 2017 on the north side of the Cut River, contiguous with South Higgins Lake State Park land.

Private Recreation Facilities

- **Hanson Hills Recreation Area** is a winter sports facility located 20 miles north of South Higgins Lake State Park. This facility provides winter recreational opportunities including downhill skiing, snowboarding, tubing, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. In the spring through fall months, these trail systems are open to bicycling, hiking, and disc golf.
- **Cross-Country Ski Headquarters** is a specialty cross-country ski shop. Established in 1974, it offers 18 kilometers of groomed trails for classic and freestyle or skate skiing, snowshoes, service, equipment, clothing, and facilities. The shop offers events most weekends during the winter ski season.
- **Other recreation opportunities:** There are several golf courses in the area. Higgins Lake is surrounded by a number of private resorts, cottages, campgrounds, canoe liveries, and marinas that cater to recreational visitors. Additional private recreation resources, such as amusement parks and go-carts, can be found in the Houghton Lake area.

A.4 History of South Higgins Lake State Park

Archaeological evidence indicates that Native Americans likely lived in the area between Higgins and Houghton lakes. This area served as the meeting point for a route that connected the Saginaw River, Grand Traverse Bay, and the Straits of Mackinaw and also was plentiful in fish, game, and wild rice to sustain the Chippewa Indians that settled there. The Grand Traverse-Saginaw trail runs along Higgins Lake.

In the 1860s, logging of the forests in the area began. Its proximity to the Muskegon River, providing for easy transport of logs, made it a prime logging location. Within a short time, all the forests in the vicinity were logged or denuded by forest fires, leaving a wasteland with only scattered areas of second growth forest.

In the early 1900s, the state acquired land that was part of the Sylvan Beach Subdivision on the south shores of Higgins Lake, primarily due to tax reversion. In 1924, Gerrish Township Supervisor Wiley Simms petitioned the state to acquire three adjoining lots for the purpose of establishing a state park (referred to in the 1924 Department of Conservation Proceedings as the Gerrish State Park Site). The site was deemed to have good potential for a state park and the recommendation was made to make additional land purchases. Higgins Lake State Park officially opened in 1927, consisting of 100 acres of land with 15 campsites, 50 tables, 24 stoves, two wells, and several toilets.

The park saw many renovations and improvements over the next 40 years or so, starting with the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) crews planting of 45,000 red and jack pines in 1934 to renew the forest that was lost during the logging era. The CCC crew also constructed several buildings; among them was the service building built in 1935, which is the only remaining historical structure on the property today. After World War II, the park became extremely popular and was expanded and modernized in the 1950s. By 1957, the park consisted of 325 campsites with electricity and upgrades to the original infrastructure. The final major increase to the park's capacity was in 1962-1963 when the campground grew to 510 campsites and a boat basin along the lake shore. When North Higgins Lake State Park was established in 1965, the park's name officially became South Higgins Lake State Park.

In 1984, the Marl Lake property was added to the park, increasing its size by 700 acres. Prior to the acquisition, the park was primarily a campground, but with this property addition a trail system was possible. In the late 1990s, the number of campsites was reduced to just under 400 by increasing the size of individual sites. The park marked its 75th anniversary in 2002 with the dedication of three new toilet/shower facilities, new electrical systems, and water upgrades.

In 2012, the CCC shelter building was named the Arthur Elmer Shelter and Concession after former Department of Conservation Parks and Recreation Chief, Arthur C. Elmer.

Recent park improvements have included replacement of the campground sewer and sanitation station and the addition of 40 full hook-up campsites (2011); the redesign of the boat launch and associated roads, a new boat wash, and repaving of campground roads (2014); and the first phase of construction for a non-motorized trail (2017).

A.5 Land Ownership

Funding Sources

The lands that comprise South Higgins Lake State Park have been acquired by the state through a variety of funding sources. Often, conditions attached to the original funding source or other details of the property transaction encumber the future use or disposition of the land.

The funding source map at the end of Appendix A identifies the sources used in acquiring land within South Higgins Lake State Park. The following outlines in more detail each funding source associated with the park.

Michigan Land Trust Fund

The “Kammer Recreational Land Trust Fund Act of 1976” (Public Act 204, 1976) created the Michigan Land Trust Fund (MLTF) program to provide a source of funding for the public acquisition of lands for resource protection and public outdoor recreation. Funding was derived from royalties on the sale and lease of state-owned mineral rights. This fund has now been replaced by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. The MLTF was used to acquire the majority of the park, about 667 acres. A large portion of this is the Marl Lake property purchased in 1984.

Federal Government Exchange

One hundred and sixty acres of land was acquired through an exchange with the U.S. Forest Service in 1949.

Exchange Acquisition

One 9.3-acre parcel was acquired through an exchange acquisition.

Special Legislation

Acquisitions for park purposes through this source are tied to specific funding established by the legislature established under Act 27, P.A. 1944, and Act 50, P.A. 1944. There was a small parcel of 0.5 acres acquired with this source.

Tax Reversion

The state acquired the balance of the land through tax reversion due to non-payment of taxes. These lands are identified as unshaded areas on the Funding Source map.

Surface and Mineral Rights

For some of the parcels within the park, the DNR owns 100% of the surface rights and 38% of the mineral rights. This is shown as “surface and mineral rights” on the “DNR Ownership Rights” map.

Granted Easements

The following easements are documented on the property:

- Consumers Power Company: construct and maintain electrical distribution line
- Roscommon County Road Commission: highway road works
- Markey Township: sanitary sewer maintenance



South Higgins Lake State Park Mini Cabin

A.6 Legal Mandates

For all park general management plans, legal mandates are identified that serve to further guide the development of the general management plan and subsequent action plans. For planning purposes, the term “Legal Mandates” refers not only to federal and state law, but also the administrative tools of “Policy” and “Directive” of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and the Parks & Recreation Division. Examples include Orders of the Director, Park and Recreation Areas State Land Rules, and all other laws, commission orders, and rules or directives that apply to the park.

Specific to South Higgins Lake State Park, the following legal mandates have been identified.

FEDERAL STATUTE	
BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT, 1940 AND AMENDMENTS	
This Act prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior, from “taking” bald eagles, including their parts, nests, or eggs. The Act defines “take” as “pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb.” “Disturb” includes actions that may result in injury to the eagle, a decrease in its productivity, or nest abandonment.	
NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT, 1966 AS AMENDED	
This is the primary federal law governing the preservation of cultural and historic resources in the United States. The law establishes a national preservation program and a system of procedural protections which encourage the identification and protection of cultural and historic resources of national, state, tribal, and local significance.	

STATE STATUTE	
NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (NREPA) AND AMENDMENTS	
PA 451 of 1994, Part 5	Gives the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) authority to make rules to support its mission. This includes State Land Rules, Land Use Orders, Wildlife Conservation Orders, Fisheries Orders, and Watercraft Control.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 31 Water Resources Protection	Provides authority to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to require a permit for any occupation, construction, filling, or grade change within the 100-year floodplain of a river, stream, drain, or inland lake.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 301 Inland Lakes and Streams	Requires a permit from the state (DEQ) to undertake certain activities relating to inland lakes and streams, such as dredging, fill, marinas, structures, alteration of flow, etc.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 303 Wetlands Protection	Requires a permit from the state (DEQ) to undertake certain activities in regulated wetlands, such as dredging, fill, construction, or drainage.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 741 State Park System	The department shall create, maintain, operate, promote, and make available for public use and enjoyment a system of state parks to preserve and protect Michigan’s significant natural resources and areas of natural beauty or historic significance, to provide open space for public recreation, and to provide an opportunity to understand Michigan’s natural resources and the need to protect and manage those resources.
PA 35 of 2010, Part 741 Recreation Passport	This act amended the Michigan Motor Vehicle Code to provide for a State Park and State-operated public boating access site “Recreation Passport” that a Michigan resident may obtain by paying an additional fee when registering a motor vehicle.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 761 Aboriginal Records and Antiquities	The state reserves the exclusive right and privilege to all aboriginal records and other antiquities including those found on the bottomlands of the Great Lakes.
PUBLIC HEALTH CODE	
PA 368 of 1978, Part 125, Campgrounds, Swimming Areas and Swimmers’ Itch	Established to protect and promote the public health by establishing health code requirements and regulations that all public (including DNR) and private campgrounds must meet. Includes permitting, licensing, inspections, and rules regarding sanitation, safety standards, and public health. Also covers testing and evaluating quality of water at bathing beaches, safety, and rescue equipment.

County Ordinance

Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) Ordinance

Under Roscommon County ORV Ordinance, an ORV may be operated on the far right of the maintained portion of a road or street within the county, however, a township within the county may close roads within the township to ORV use and the County Road Commission may close up to 30% of the total linear miles of roads to protect the environment or in the interests of safety. ORV use is prohibited on state or federal highways within the county.

Orders

The following Orders apply to South Higgins Lake State Park:

LAND USE ORDERS OF THE DIRECTOR	
5.12 CERTAIN STATE PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS, REQUIREMENTS FOR USE, CERTAIN CONDUCT PROHIBITED.	
Order 5.12. The following conduct shall apply to use of Michigan state parks and recreation areas: South Higgins Lake State Park, prohibited conduct.	
(7) A person shall not do the following at South Higgins Lake State Park:	
(a) Park or leave a motor vehicle in the day-use area of South Higgins Lake State Park between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. without written permission from a representative of the department.	
(b) Leave a trailer unattached to a vehicle in the boat launch parking lot.	
(c) Park a vehicle without boat trailer attached, or a vehicle not being used to transport a boat, in the boat launch parking lot.	
(d) A person shall not leave a vessel unattended, moored to access piers, in boat basin, beached along shoreline, or anchored to riparian bottomlands between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. without prior written approval from an authorized representative of the department.	
5.16A ENTRY, USE, AND OCCUPANCY OF CERTAIN STATE PARKS, RECREATION AREAS, AND SCENIC SITES, PROHIBITED CONDUCT.	
Order 5.16a (1) A person shall not do any of the following:	
(a) Enter any of the following state-owned lands with a motor vehicle unless a valid Michigan recreation passport has been purchased and affixed to the vehicle:	
(76) South Higgins Lake State Park, Roscommon County.	
5.4 WATERCRAFT USE IN CERTAIN STATE PARKS, PROHIBITED CONDUCT.	
Order 5.4 A person shall not do the following:	
(3) Launch, retrieve, or assist in either of these activities of any vessel powered by any motor, except a vessel powered only by an electric motor.	
(a) South Higgins Lake State Park – Marl lake	

Wildlife Conservation Orders

Wildlife is owned by all the people of the state of Michigan, and protection is administered and managed by the Michigan DNR. Hunting and trapping regulations including methods of take, bag limits, license quotas, and season dates are established by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) and are described in the Wildlife Conservation Orders.

7.25 SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK, HUNTING AND TRAPPING ALLOWED.

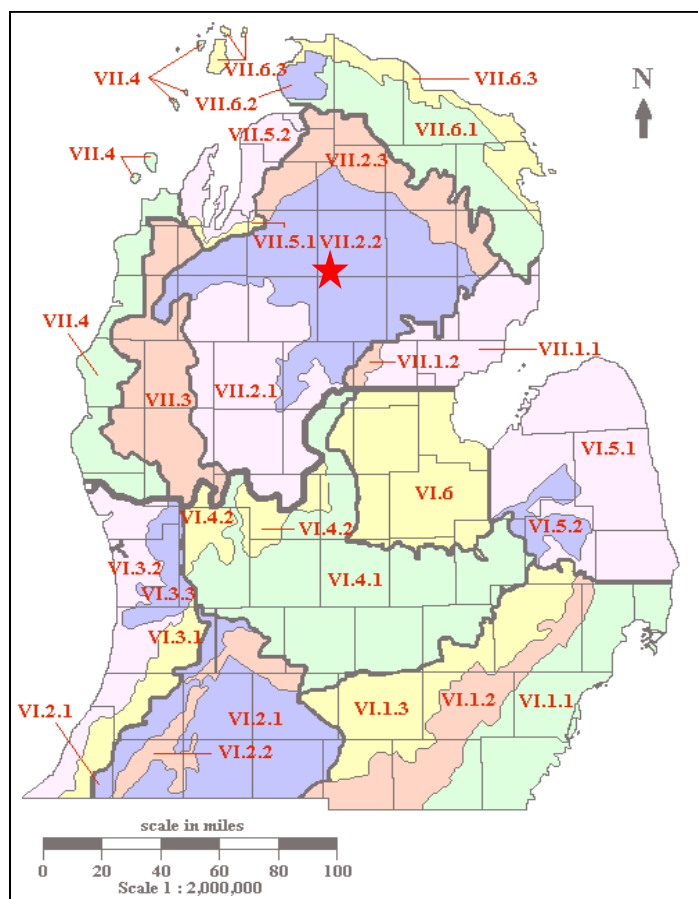
Sec. 7.25 Hunting and trapping shall be allowed during the established seasons on all state-owned lands within sections 3 and 4, T23N R3W, and sections 33 and 34, T24N R3W.

STATE LAND RULES

Parks and Recreation Areas – State Land Rules are issued by authority conferred on the Michigan DNR by Section 504 of 1994 PA 451 MCL 324.504. The rules cover entry, use, and occupation of state lands and unlawful acts



Benches near the Boat Basin



A.7 Landscape Context and Natural Resources

Regional Landscape

The following information was obtained from the Regional Landscape Ecosystems of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, prepared by Dennis Albert in 1995. South Higgins Lake State Park is located in the central part of ecoregion VII.2.2, Grayling Outwash Plain. Sub-subsection VII.2.2 is a high outwash plain with several large lakes and rivers. Within the plain are several steep ridges surrounded by flat outwash. The climate is the most continental within the section, with extremely low winter temperatures and frosts throughout the summer. This 4,061 square mile sub-subsection has elevations ranging from 900 to 1,580 feet and contains some of the thickest glacial drifts (250 to 800 feet) in the state.

Climate

The growing season ranges from 80 to 130 days and frost danger is high throughout the growing season. Snowfall in this region ranges from 140 inches in the northwest to 50 inches in the southeast. Annual precipitation is typically 28 to 32 inches. Extreme minimum temperature ranges from -40°F to -48°F.

Water Resources

This region has several large lakes occupying the outwash plains, including Houghton Lake, Higgins Lake, Lake Margrethe, and Lake St. Helen. South Higgins Lake State Park is located within the headwaters of the Muskegon Watershed on the south shore of Higgins Lake. Higgins Lake is a large (10,000 acre) spring fed lake known for its deep, clear waters, which reach 135 feet in the deepest areas. The lake discharges into the Cut River, which feeds the much smaller (237 acres), shallower (less than six feet deep) Marl Lake which is encompassed within the park boundary. The Cut River flows south to Houghton Lake, which is the largest inland lake in Michigan. Wetlands in the park, as indicated by the National Wetlands Inventory, include an area of freshwater forested/shrub wetland to the north and partially to the east of Marl Lake and emergent wetland along the Cut River.

Topography

Most of the flat outwash plain is at an elevation of 1,050 to 1,300 feet. Within the state park, elevation is fairly consistent ranging from 1,181 feet in several areas to 1,214 feet at the west end of the property.

Soils

Slopes in the zero to three percent or zero to six percent classes are most common but slopes as steep as 18 to 45 percent occur within the park. Drainage classes range from excessively drained to very poorly drained (the most prevalent). Most of the soils are sand, but there are also a few types of muck and peat textures. The most common soil types are Au Gres, Graycalm and Kinross, but Croswell, Deford, and Dawson are also found throughout the park.

Geology and Mineral Resources

Higgins Lake, like most of Michigan's inland lakes, is a kettle lake that formed after the last of the continental glaciers receded from Michigan at the end of the last glacial period.

The surface geology of the area surrounding Higgins Lake consists of sand and gravel from ice-contact drift, glacial outwash, and postglacial alluvium. The glacial drift in this region is in the range of 200 to 400 feet thick. The coarser glacial sediments are frequently quarried across the state for sand and gravel, primarily for use in road construction and maintenance. Several active sand and gravel mining operations are located in the vicinity of the lake, including a pit immediately south of South Higgins Lake State Park. Bedrock underlying the Quaternary sediments in the park consists of the Mississippian-age Michigan Formation. The Michigan Formation is not considered to have economic value in this part of the state.

Large producing oil fields are located to the north and west of Higgins Lake. These are older fields that are currently undergoing secondary recovery, or enhanced oil recovery (EOR), operations. All of the state-owned land around the lake has been subject to recent oil and gas leasing activity. The majority of the state acreage within South Higgins Lake State Park is no longer under lease. Some remaining active state leases within South Higgins Lake State Park are in the process of being released. All of the state land within the park has been classified as “leasable non-development,” indicating that, while leasing is permitted, construction of drill sites on the surface will not be allowed. The state does not own all of the land or mineral rights within the park. Where the state is not the mineral rights owner, the state is required to provide the mineral rights owner reasonable access to the surface for the purpose of mineral exploration and development, if the owner of the mineral estate elects to develop their interest in the property.

Early 1800s Vegetation

According to the General Land Office records of the early 1880s, the area was primarily hardwood conifer swamps consisting of white pine, trembling aspen, paper birch, balsam poplar, and red maple. These swamps were found near the Higgins Lake shoreline. Low conifer swamps were also found near the Higgins Lake shoreline as well on the eastern shores of Marl Lake. The abiotic conditions and vegetation were very similar to those found on lacustrine deposits in Upper Michigan. Other areas of the land within the park boundary were reported to support red pine and oak forest. Near the headwaters of the Cut River, the vegetation cover was recorded as hemlock and white pine forests.

Current Vegetation

The majority of the current land cover in the park consists of dry-mesic northern forest to the west and south and woody wetlands to the north and east of Marl Lake. There are also some coniferous forests, mixed forests, and shrub/scrub interspersed.

Rare Fauna

Below is the list of rare animals occurring in the park as of the 2015 survey period for South Higgins Lake State Park. The rare snails occur in the near shore areas of south Higgins Lake, adjacent to the park. There are no known rare plant species at this time.

FAUNA: RARE ANIMALS PRESENT AT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STATE STATUS
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	bald eagle	special concern
<i>Physella magnalacustris</i>	Great Lakes physa	special concern
<i>Physella parkeri</i>	broadshouldered physa	threatened
<i>Stagnicola contracta</i>	deepwater pondsnail	endangered

Wildlife

Higgins Lake is a popular stopover location for migrating waterfowl. Species observed include mallard, black duck, wood duck, northern pintail, bufflehead, canvasback, common merganser, goldeneye, redhead, red-breasted merganser, old squaw, scaup, and Canada Geese. Common resident nesting species include mallard, wood duck, common merganser, and red-breasted merganser. Common loons, which are listed as a state threatened species, are frequently observed on Higgins Lake with documented nesting and reproduction. Bald eagles and osprey can be observed feeding at Higgins Lake and typically nest within one to three miles of the Higgins Lake shore. Muskrat are occasionally seen within Higgins Lake and are very common at Marl Lake and the Cut River, along with river otter. Trumpeter swans are typically transient species at Marl Lake and along the Cut River. White-tailed deer, fox, raccoon, bobcat, skunk, various species of squirrels, and the infrequent black bear are all visitors to South Higgins Lake State Park. Many species of song birds abound throughout the park, given the variety of upland and wetland habitats that are found within the park boundary.

Fisheries

Higgins Lake is about 10,000 acres in size and 135 feet in depth. Higgins Lake is an extremely popular lake for fishing, particularly for ice fishing in the winter. Higgins Lake has self-sustaining populations of lake whitefish, lake herring, northern pike, rainbow smelt, smallmouth bass, rock bass, and yellow perch. The lake is also stocked with lake trout and rainbow trout. Higgins Lake is designated as a Type E trout lake. Type E regulations allow year-round fishing, with minimum size limits of 15 inches for all trout species, and a catch limit of three trout per day. South Higgins Lake State Park provides excellent access for anglers to launch boats or access the lake for ice fishing.

Marl Lake provides additional fishing opportunities at South Higgins Lake State Park. Marl Lake is approximately 237 acres in size, with most of it being less than ten feet deep. Due to its

shallow nature, Marl Lake is prone to winter fish kills. Despite this, Marl Lake does offer fishing opportunities for bluegill, pumpkinseed sunfish, largemouth bass, and northern pike.

A.8 Recreation Resources

Boat Launch

A hard-surfaced ramp with sufficient depth for all trailer-able watercraft (type 1) is located in a small boat basin in the day-use area of the park with 180 parking spaces. There is also an improved boat launch on Marl Lake for launch of vessels with electric motors only. A boat wash is available near the launch site on park property.

Trails

There is a self-guided trail in South Higgins Lake State Park as well as 5.5 miles of hiking trails surrounding Marl Lake. These trails offer naturalists a good opportunity to explore the local area and observe wildlife and are open to hiking and skiing

Fishing

Access to Higgins Lake provides for ample fishing opportunities, including ice fishing. Marl Lake also provides for excellent fishing opportunities from a canoe or small boat.

Beach

South Higgins Lake State Park contains $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of sandy beach, including four designated swimming areas. There is a shelter near the beach, picnic areas, and bathroom facilities.

Pet-Friendly Area

There are two pet-friendly areas of shoreline at South Higgins Lake State Park. The first is for campers only and is near the West Campground. The second area is in the day-use area. Pets must be on a six-foot leash and under an owner's immediate control at all times.

Concession / Store

A park concession / store is located at the day-use beach area and is open daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day, with more limited fall hours. Row boats, canoes, paddle boats, pontoons, and boats with motors for fishing are available for rent with special services offered for groups.

Hunting

The Marl Lake area is open to hunting during scheduled hunting seasons. There are good opportunities for waterfowl and small game, such as squirrels and rabbits, and hunters also have some success during turkey, deer, and bear seasons.

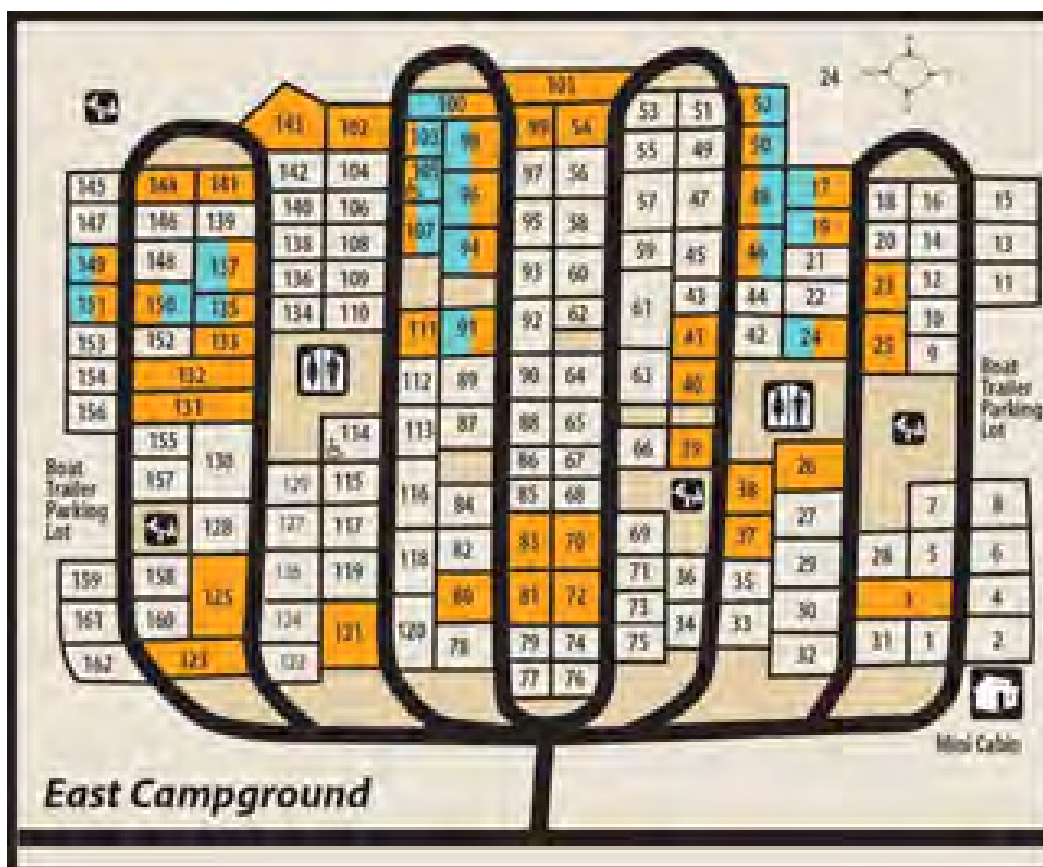
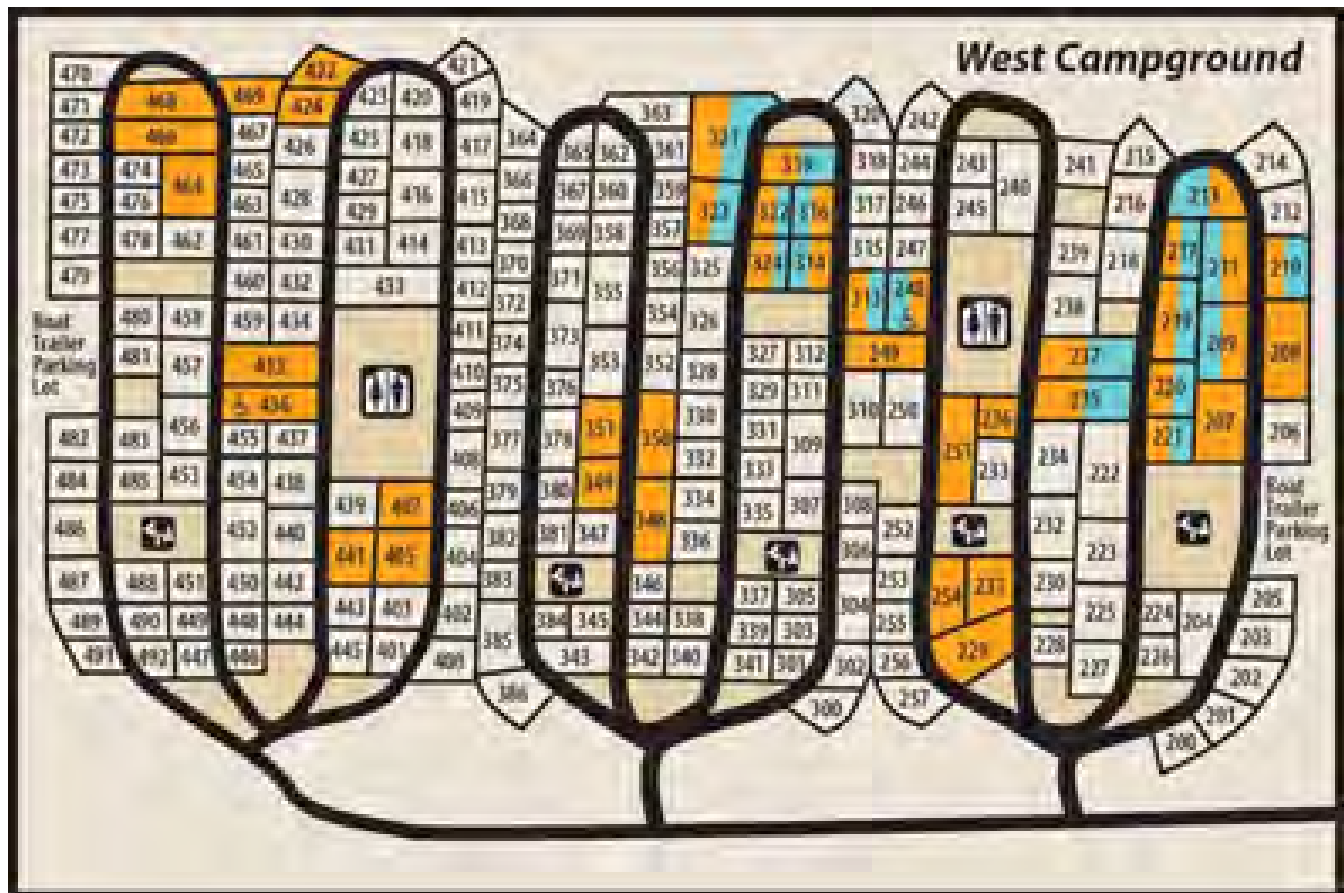
Metal Detecting

Metal detecting is recognized as a legitimate recreation activity when it is conducted in ways that do not damage the natural and cultural resources in Michigan state parks nor violate applicable state statutes. Metal detecting is allowed in designated areas within the park as shown on the following map. Any items found must be reviewed by park staff and may be retained for further investigation.

Camping

South Higgins Lake State Park provides two campgrounds within the state park. The East Campground contains 162 campsites and one mini cabin. The West Campground has 235 campsites. Both are modern campgrounds with electrical hook-ups and 50AMP services available. Several playground areas are provided throughout the campground.





A.9 Historic and Cultural Resources

There is one historical structure within the park boundary. The park concession building was constructed in 1935 by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and has seen many renovations since its initial construction. It was originally built as a beach house. The first remodel was to make the building into a pavilion in 1955 and in 1961, a park store was added. In 1993 a picnic shelter was added, giving more space for day-use visitors and resulting in the current structure seen today. Although this building has undergone much remodeling, the additions appear to have been sensitive to the original building. While it is not considered a strong candidate for preservation, the 2003 PRD Historic Structures Report recommends the building is to be maintained to retain its historic structure while an adaptive re-use for the structure can be found.

STRUCTURES	DMB#
Concession Building	80515

Several archaeological sites have been identified within the state park boundary. There remains a high potential for new prehistoric sites to be found due to known site locations in the area and the fact that the majority of the park (around Marl Lake) has received little human impact. Also, due to the fact that the current park area was once logged, there is the potential for lumber era sites to be present.

According to the state archaeological site file, there are three recorded sites in South Higgins Lake State Park. The sites are 20RO6, 20RO7, and 20RO21. Another site, 20RO8, is just outside of the park boundaries. Site 20RO6 is represented by pre-contact Native American artifacts, and a logging-era dam. Site 20RO7 is composed of a scatter of pre-contact Native American artifacts. Site 20RO21 is also represented by pre-contact Native American artifacts. There is no information in the state file to suggest that there has been any archaeological

survey in the park. Given the presence of three recorded sites, and one site just outside the park, there is the potential that there are additional sites within the park boundaries. Similar to North Higgins Lake State Park, Hinsdale's (1931) Archaeological Atlas of Michigan illustrates the Grand Traverse – Saginaw trail east of the southern end of Higgins Lake; it is possible the trail may have passed through the park.

A.10 Programming and Events

South Higgins Lake State Park offers programming each summer, from Memorial Day through Labor Day, through the State Park Explorer Program. State park explorer guides offer a variety of educational and recreational programs and hikes that feature the park's unique natural and cultural resources. Programs offered include Smokey Bear/Forest Resources fire prevention education, Meteors and S'mores, hiking, and various programs on Michigan wildlife. Other special events and programs include:

- Story Time in the park through a partnership with the Houghton Lake Public Library and Roscommon Area District Library
- Explorer Guide programs include Smokey Bear/FRD fire prevention education, Meteors and S'mores, Hiking, and various programs on Michigan wildlife
- Halloween Festival features hay rides, a spooky walk, pumpkin painting, face painting, kid's crafts, a costume parade, trick-or-treating, and a campsite decorating contest
- Weekly movie in the park (partner with the Houghton Lake Public Library)
- Higgins Lake Sunrise Run (5k, 10k, half-marathon, and fun run)
- Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run
- Habitat for Humanity 5k Run



A.11 Park Use Statistics

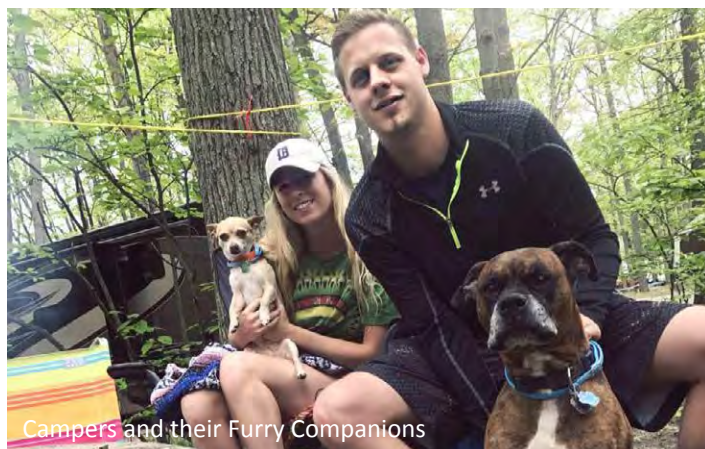
In 2017, South Higgins Lake State Park was frequented by an estimated 299,318 visitors (day-use and campers). The number of campers was derived from camp nights recorded in the reservation system multiplied by the average party size (3.3 for the campsites and 2.8 for the cabins). Day-use numbers are estimated by car counts in the park. The majority of campers come from the Saginaw, Midland, and Bay City area to the east side of the state and the Roscommon and Houghton Lake areas close to the park. The park also draws visitors from farther afield, including the cities of Livonia, Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Flint.



Camping Under the Stars



A Group of Happy Campers



Campers and their Furry Companions

FISCAL YEAR (OCT 1 – SEPT 30)	NUMBER OF CAMPER	DAY-USE VISITORS
2017	94,704	204,614
2016	90,235	190,064
2015	86,796	164,586

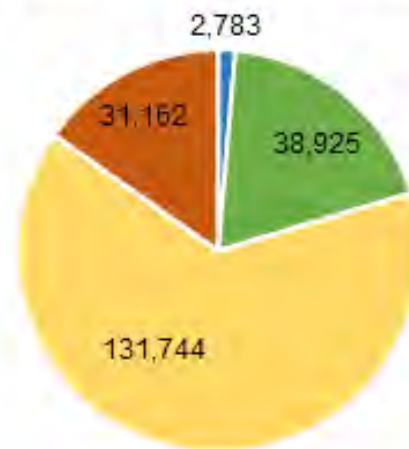
2017 Camping and Day-Use Statistics

- Day-use visitors: 204,614 visitors
- Camp nights: 28,596 nights
- Number of campers: 94,704 visitors
- Mini cabins: 131 Nights
- Number of campers in mini cabins: 370 visitors
- Shelter rentals: 28 reservations

TOP CITIES FOR CAMPING RESERVATIONS (2016)

CITY & STATE	RESERVATIONS	NUMBER OF NIGHTS
SAGINAW, MI	278	1142
ROSCOMMON, MI	247	607
MIDLAND, MI	222	815
BAY CITY, MI	178	663
LIVONIA, MI	100	369
LANSING, MI	100	269
FREELAND, MI	89	347
GRAND RAPIDS, MI	82	282
HOUGHTON LAKE, MI	81	238
FLINT, MI	78	294

2017 Day-Use Visitors by Season



■ Winter ■ Spring ■ Summer ■ Fall

Michigan's Invasive Species Watch List

The following information is presented as a guide for reporting occurrences of select invasive species of concern in Michigan.

Invasive Species “Watch List”

The invasive species included on the watch list are priority species that have been identified as posing an immediate and significant threat to Michigan's natural resources. These species have either never been confirmed in Michigan or have very limited distribution, or are localized. Early detection and timely reporting of occurrences of these species is crucial for increasing the likelihood of stopping an invasion and limiting negative ecological and economic impacts. Species are listed below by category. The invasive species below should be reported immediately and directly to staff. Please use the contacts below each category to report a possible detection of a watch list species.

Insects and Tree Diseases (Tree diseases list the scientific name for the pathogen or fungus associated with the disease)

- Asian longhorned beetle (*Anoplophora glabripennis*)
- Balsam wooly adelgid (*Adelges piceae*)
- Hemlock wooly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*)
- Thousand cankers disease (*Geosmithia morbida*)
- Spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*)

Report the species above to John Bedford – MDARD Plant Industry Section,
bedfordj@michigan.gov, 517-284-5650

Mammals

- Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*)

Report the species above to Greg Norwood – DNR Wildlife Division,
norwoodg@michigan.gov, 517-342-4514

Terrestrial Plants

- Asiatic sand sedge (*Carex kobomugi* Ohwi)
- Chinese yam (*Dioscorea oppositifolia* L.)
- Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*)
- Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum* (Trin.) A. Camus)
- Kudzu (*Pueraria montana* var. *lobata*)
- Mile-a-minute weed (*Persicaria perfoliata*)
- Japanese chaff flower (*Achyranthes japonica*)

Report the species above to Greg Norwood – DNR Wildlife Division,
norwoodg@michigan.gov, 517-342-4514



Aquatic Plants

- Parrot feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*)
- Yellow Floating Heart (*Nymphoides peltata*)
- European frog-bit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*)
- European Water-clover (*Marsilea quadrifolia*) – *This species is currently allowable for sale and possession. Please contact the DEQ if these plants are observed outside of cultivation.*
- Brazilian elodea (*Egeria densa*)
- Hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*)
- Water chestnut (*Trapa natans*)
- Water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) – *This species is currently allowable for sale and possession. Please contact the DEQ if these plants are observed outside of cultivation.*
- Water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*) – *This species is currently allowable for sale and possession. Please contact the DEQ if these plants are observed outside of cultivation.*
- Water soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*)

Report the species above to Aquatic Nuisance Control Program – DEQ Water Resources Division, DEQ-WRD-ANC@michigan.gov, 517-284-5593

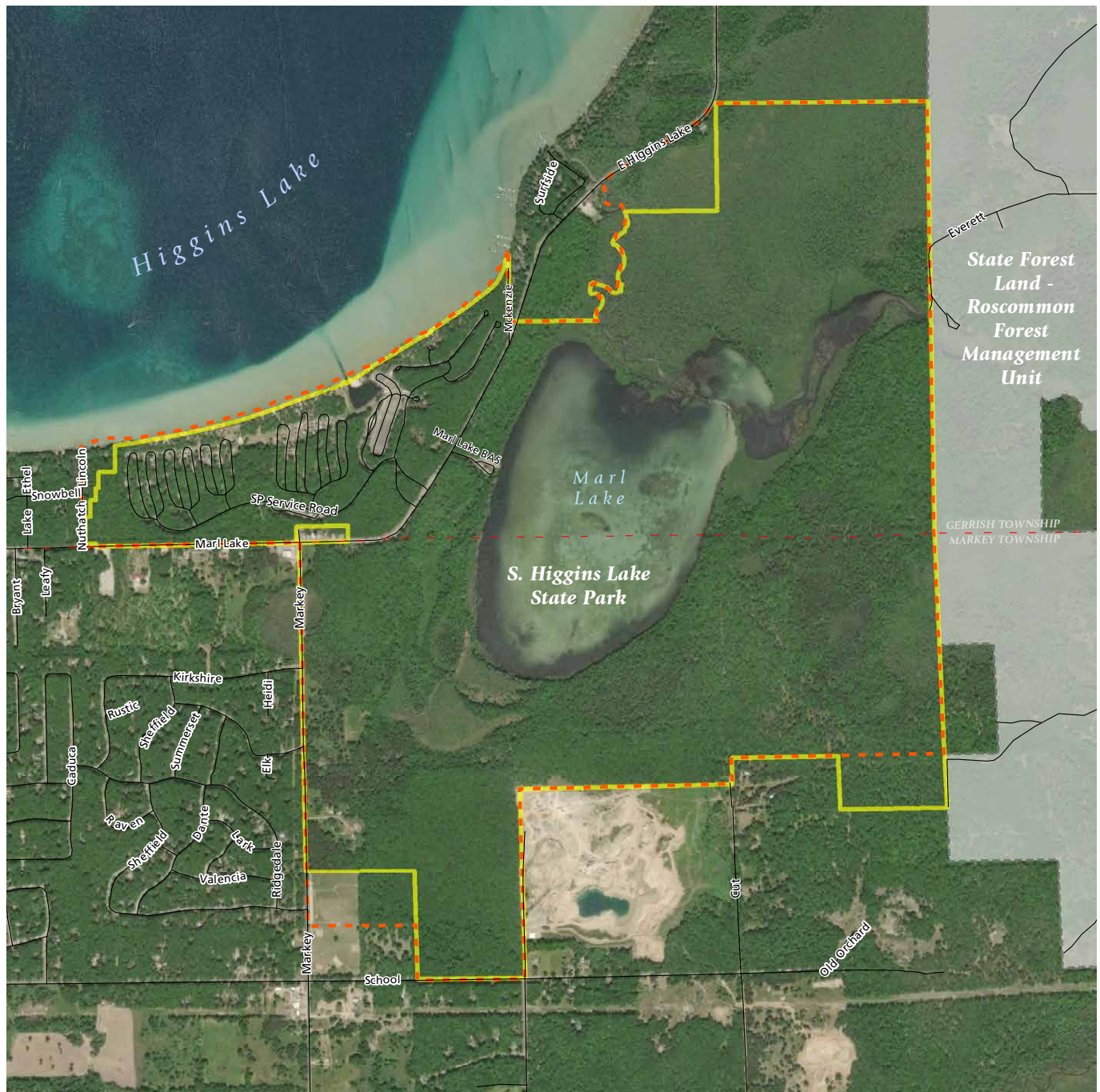
Fish and other Aquatic Animals

- Invasive carps
 - Silver carp (*Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*)
 - Bighead carp (*Hypophthalmichthys nobilis*)
 - Grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*)
 - Black carp (*Mylopharyngodon piceus*)
- Northern snakehead (*Channa argus*)
- Red swamp crayfish (*Procambarus clarkii*)
- New Zealand mud snail (*Potamopyrgus antipodarum*)

Report the species above to Seth Herbst – DNR Fisheries Division, herbstS1@michigan.gov, 517-284-5841 or for invasive carp report electronically at www.michigan.gov/asiancarp

For more information, please visit:
www.michigan.gov/invasives





S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Park Boundary

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, ESRI Basemap

- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- NRC 2004 Approved State Park Project Boundary*
- Roscommon Forest Unit
- Municipal Boundaries
- Roads

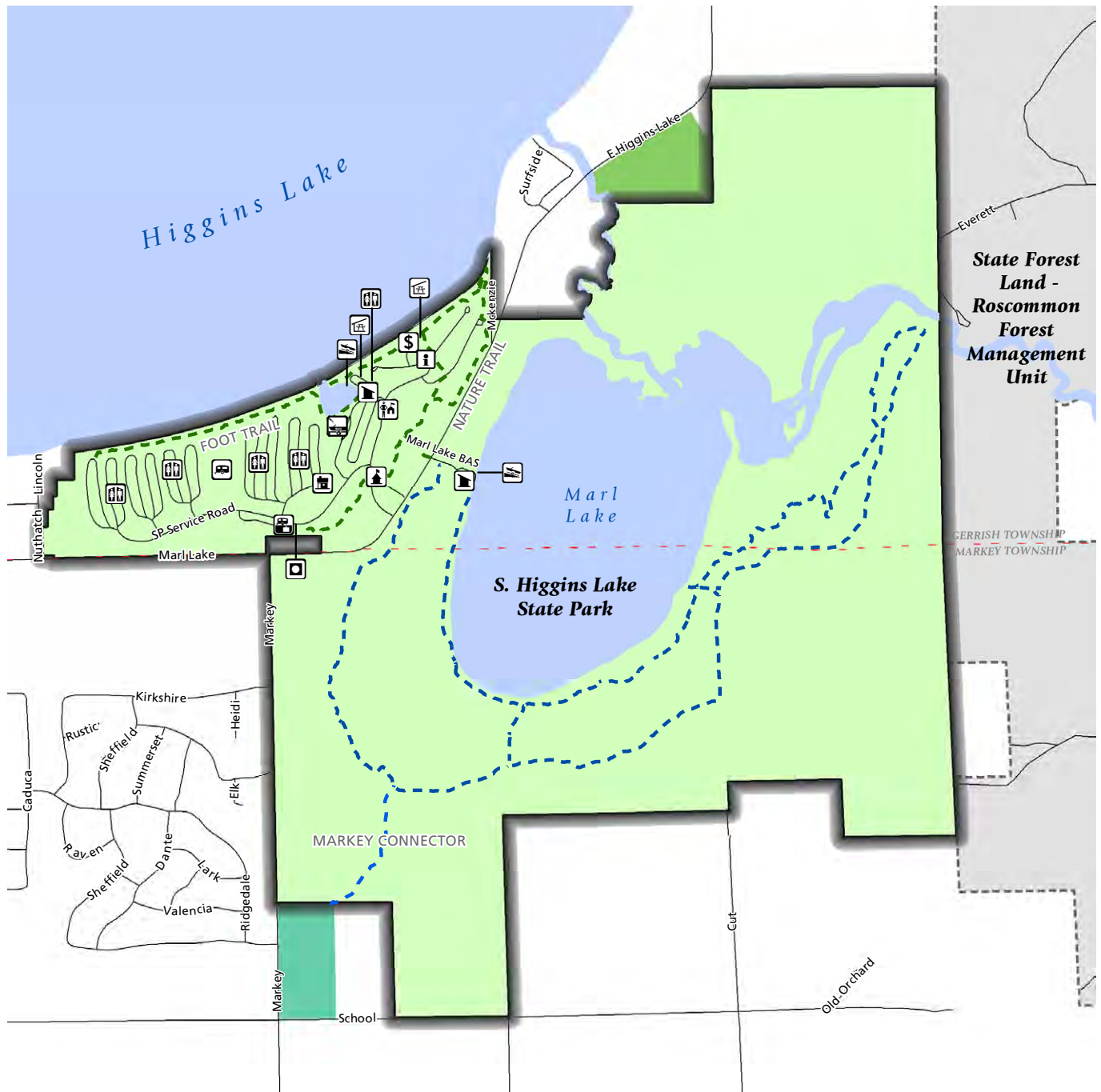
0 0.25 0.5 Miles



Date: 7/2/2018

*A Project Boundary is a geographic area in which the DNR is seeking to acquire property that supports the mission of the DNR on a willing buyer / willing seller basis.

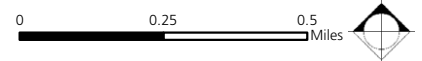
B R I
Beckett & Raeder



S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Park Amenities

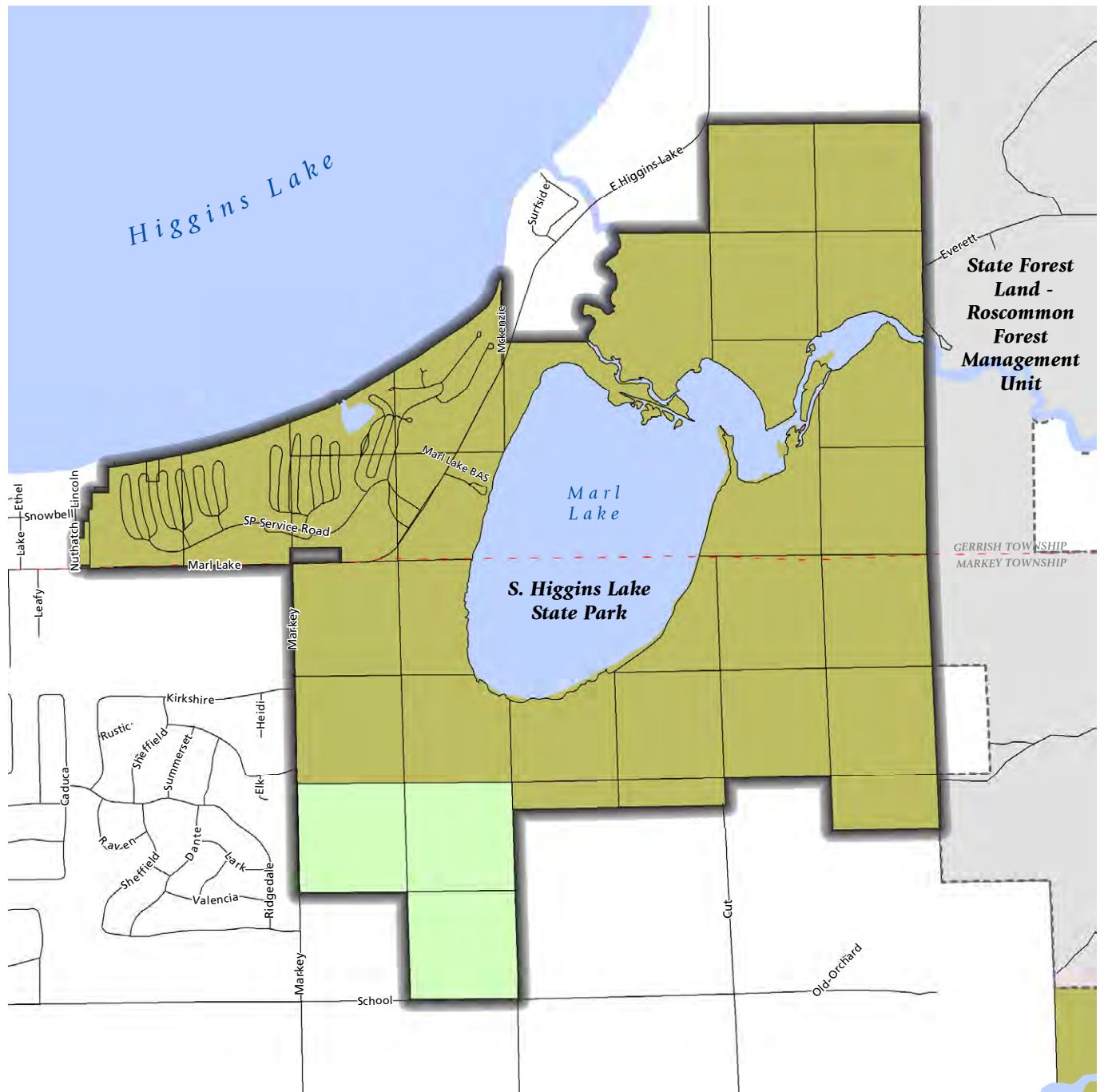
Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources



Date: 11/21/2018

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|------------|----------|-----------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|-------------|----------|
| S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary | Municipal Boundaries | Roads | Hiking Trails | Hiking and Skiing Trails | Land Conservancy Property | Markey Township Park | Concession/Store | Contact Station | Headquarters | Informational | Mini Cabin | Pavilion | Boat Wash | Registration Station | Sanitation Station | Toilet / Shower | Vault Toilet | Campground | Boat Launch | Pavilion |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|-------|---------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------|------------|----------|-----------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------|-------------|----------|

Beckett & Raeder



S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

DNR Ownership Rights

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Date: 8/1/2018

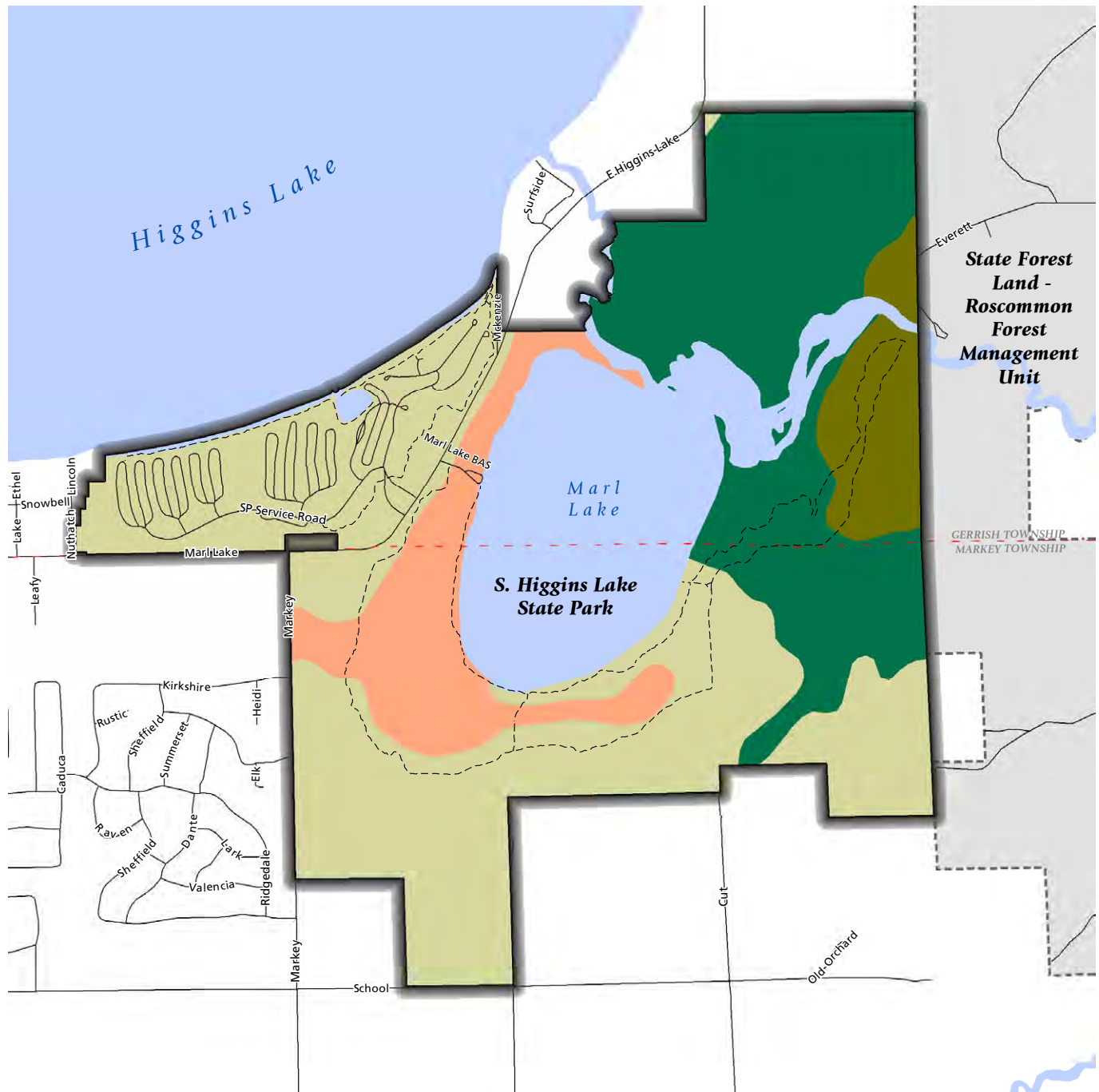
- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- State Forest Land
- Municipal Boundaries
- Roads
- Rivers / Streams
- Lakes

Ownership Rights:

- Surface
- Mineral and Surface*

Mineral and Surface* rights represent 100% surface ownership, but some lands represent only 38% of mineral rights ownership. Please see the supporting analysis text for details.

B R I
Beckett & Raeder



S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Land Cover, 1800s

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- State Forest Land
- Municipal Boundaries
- Roads
- Rivers / Streams
- Lakes

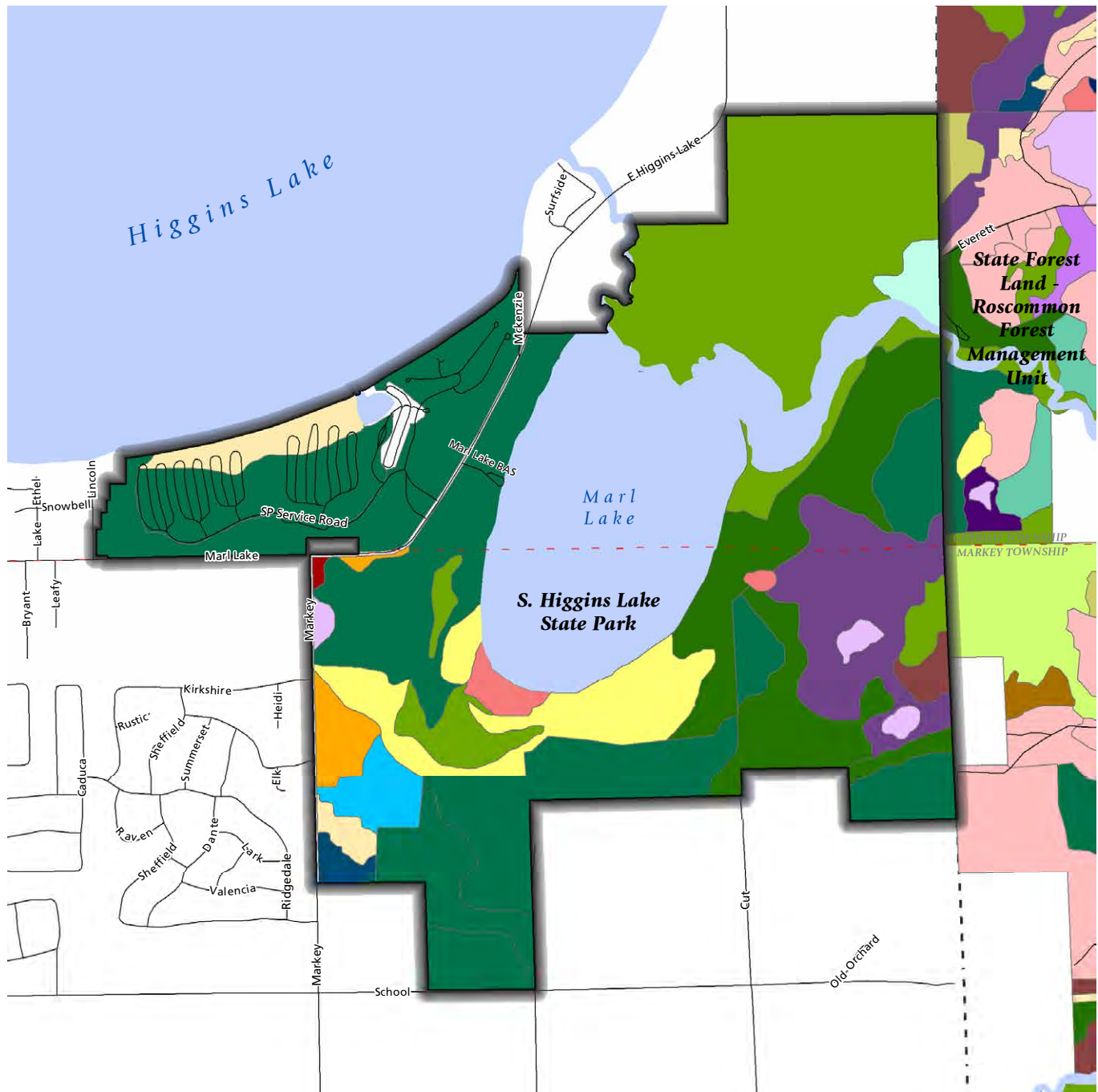
- Conifer / Hardwood Swamp
- Red Pine / White Pine
- Hemlock / White Pine
- Low Conifer Swamp

Note: Mapping derived from original notes of the State of Michigan General Land Office Survey conducted in the early to mid 1800s.

0 0.25 0.5 Miles



Date: 7/3/2018

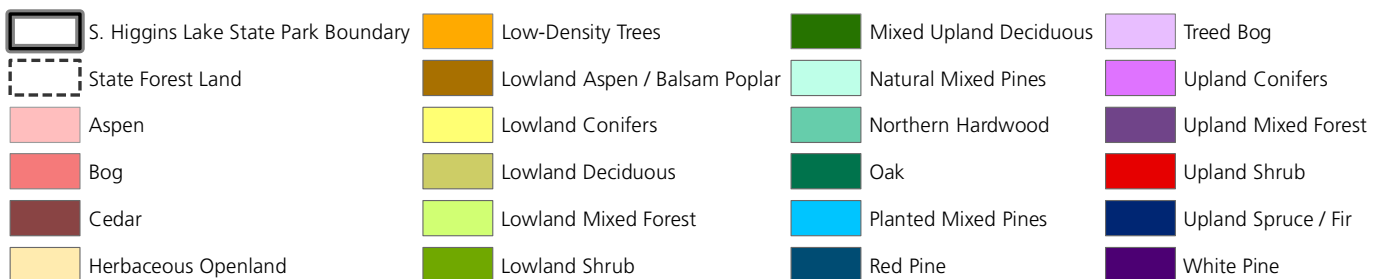


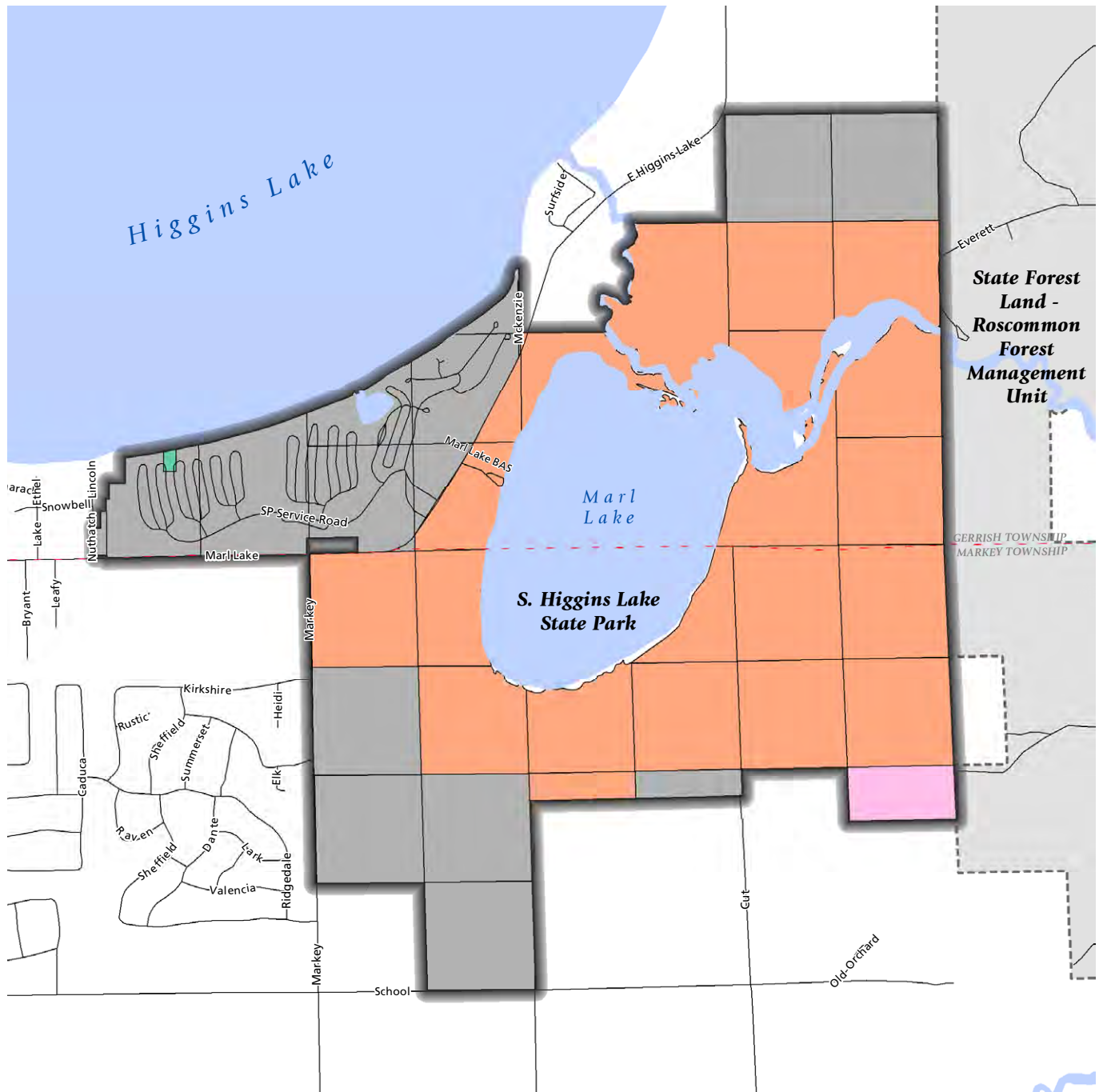
S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Forest Type

Data Sources: Michigan C-GI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Date: 11/21/2018





S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

DNR Funding Sources

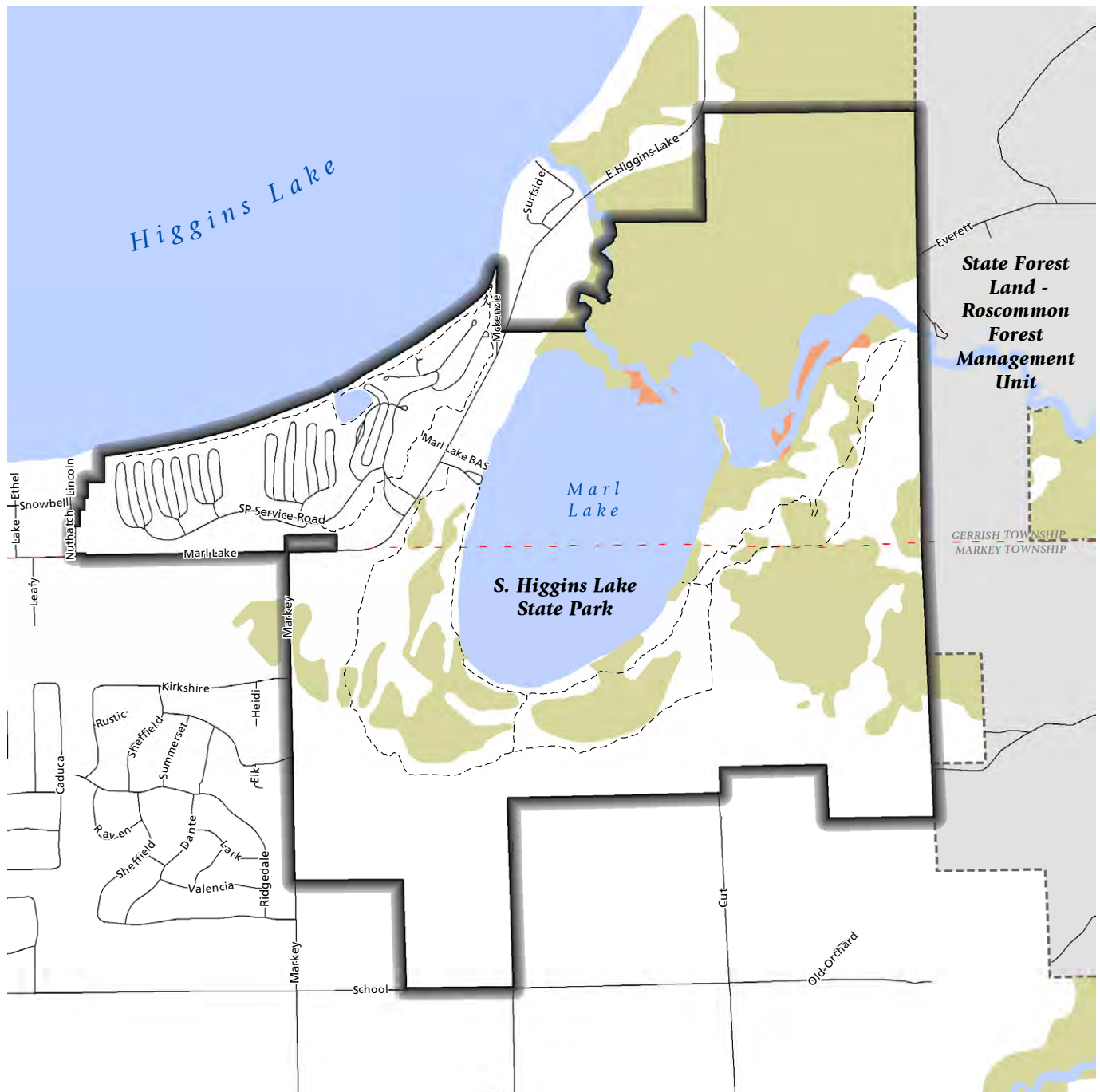
Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- State Forest Land
- Municipal Boundaries
- Roads
- Rivers / Streams
- Lakes

Funding Sources for Lands:

- Land Exchange Facilitation Fund
- Special Legislation
- Michigan Land Trust Fund
- Tax Reverted Land

Date: 7/2/2018



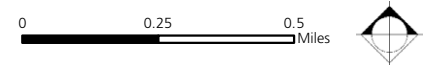
S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Sensitive Features

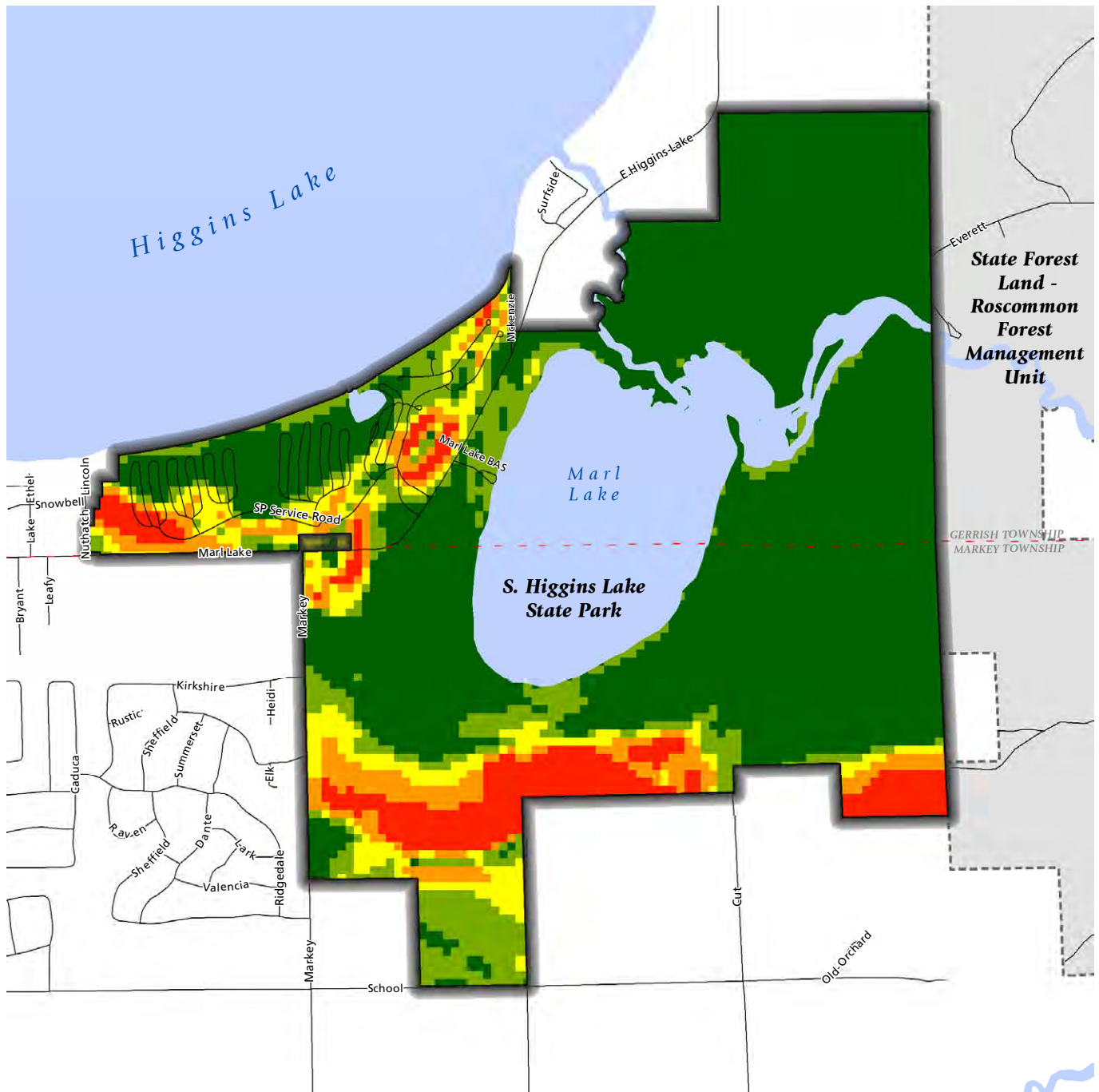
Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources (NW1 2015)

- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- State Forest Land
- Municipal Boundaries
- Roads
- Trails

- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested / Shrub Wetland
- Rivers / Streams
- Lakes



Date: 7/2/2018



S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Slopes

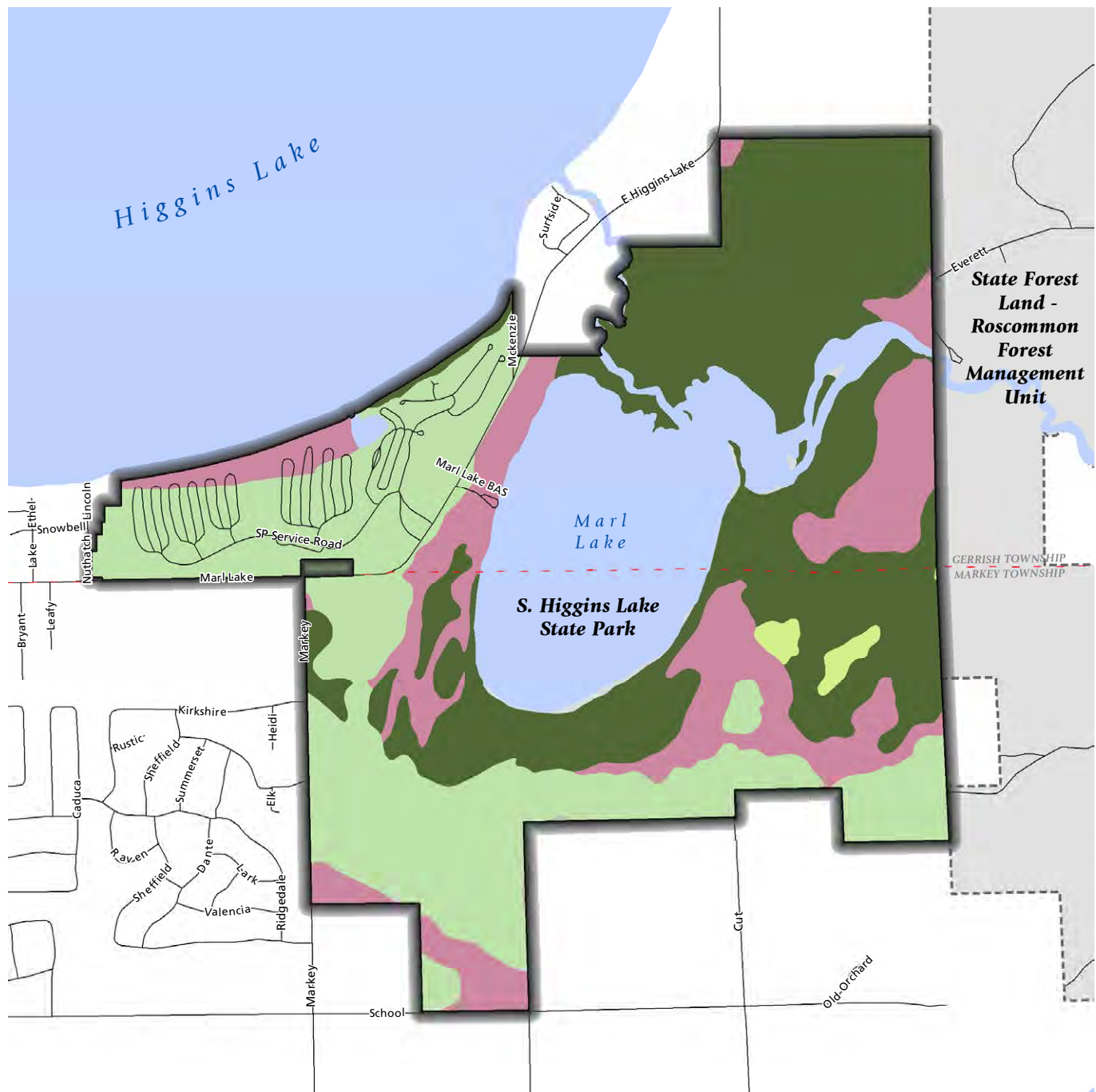
Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Date: 7/2/2018

- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- State Forest Land
- Municipal Boundaries
- Roads
- Rivers / Streams
- Lakes

Percent Slope:

- 0.0% - 3.0%
- 3.1% - 6.0%
- 6.1% - 10.0%
- 10.1% - 15.0%
- 15.1% or greater

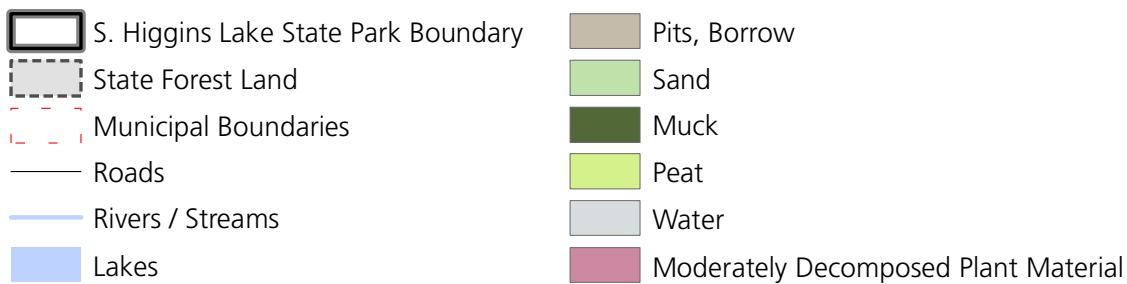


S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

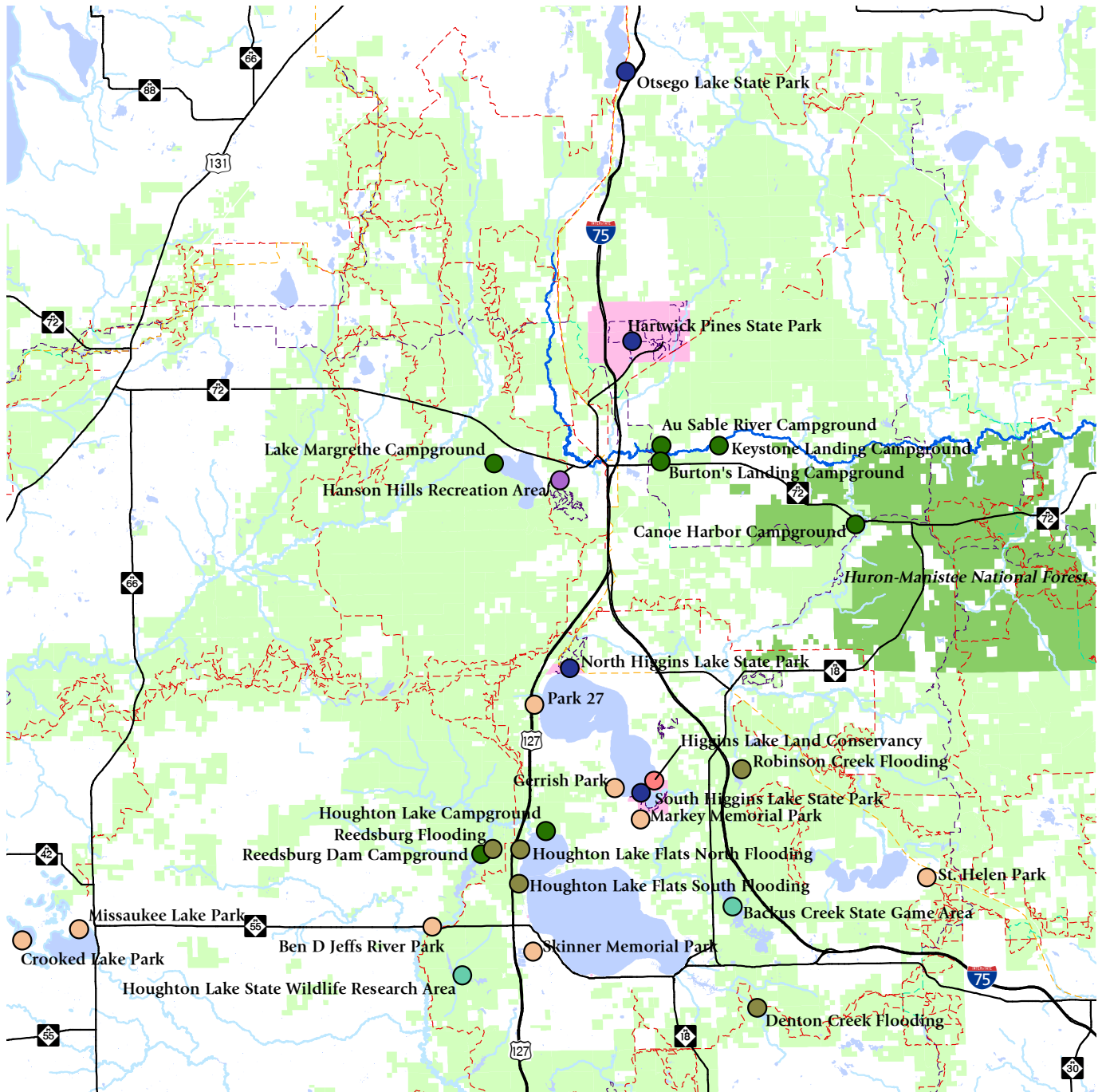
Soil Texture

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, ArcGIS Online Soil Resource Center SSURGO Download

Date: 7/2/2018



B R i
Beckett & Raeder



N. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Regional Recreation Resources

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Date: 11/26/2018

- Roads
- Rivers
- Au Sable River
- Lakes
- State Park Land
- State Forest Land
- National Forest Land

Regional Resources:

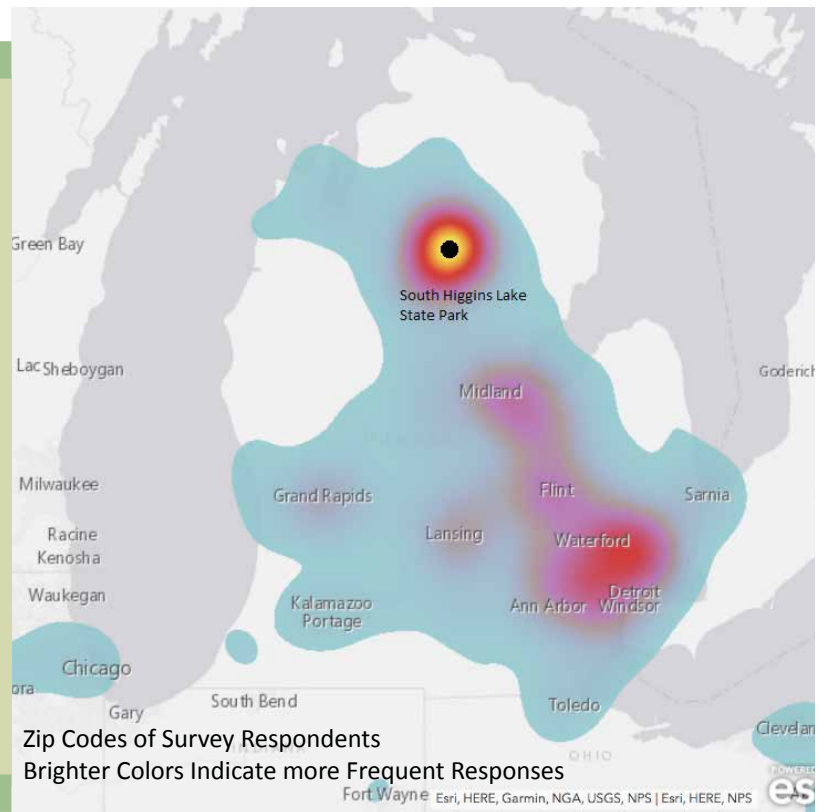
- State Forest Campground
- State Parks
- State Wildlife / Game Areas
- State Wildlife Management Area
- Municipal Parks
- Private Recreation Facilities
- Land Conservancy

Local and Regional Trails:

- Motorized
- Non-Motorized
- Both
- Iron Belle Trail (Existing)

B R i
Beckett & Raeder

Many of the survey respondents reported a primary address in the vicinity of South Higgins Lake State Park as well as the wider in central/northern Michigan and southeast Michigan, as shown on the adjacent heat map. A very small number of respondents were located outside of Michigan and are not shown on this map.



Appendix

B: Public and Stakeholder Input

B.1 Project Website

On the adjacent page is a snapshot of the project website at www.mdnrmanagementplans/cheboygan-state-park. The website was available for public viewing throughout the duration of the planning process and was updated with maps, survey results, and the draft plan. Members of the public could contact the planning team through the website contact form.

B.2 Online Public Survey

Summary of Survey Results

The DNR recognizes that public input is a critical component of park planning, thus input is sought through multiple venues to gather the opinions of a variety of users. One of the methods the Planning Team used to gather input from North Higgins Lake State Park users was an online survey. This survey was advertised through a press release and an email to those who have registered for the park's overnight accommodations in

the last 12 months. The survey link was also shared on social media. Responses were collected from March 29th, 2018, through April 30, 2018.

Nine hundred and fifty-seven responses to the survey were collected. Of the 957 respondents, 925 (97%) reported that they have visited the park within the past 5 years. The remaining thirty-two participants indicated that they have not visited the park in the past five years (3%). Comments show that the most common reasons for not visiting the park include owning a cabin/cottage on the lake and that the park is too crowded/loud.

Most respondents were between the ages of 50 and 64 (42%). Many of the park visitors reported a primary address in the vicinity of South Higgins Lake State Park as well as the wider in central/northern Michigan and southeast Michigan, which can be seen on the map above. A very small number of respondents were located outside of Michigan and are not shown on this map.



SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

MORE ABOUT THE PARK

- [South Higgins Lake State Park \(MDNR\)](#)

MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT

- [Presentations and Meetings](#)
- [Maps](#)
- [Documents](#)

MORE ABOUT MDNR MANAGEMENT PLANS

- [Park Management Plans \(MDNR\)](#)
- [Planning Process \(MDNR\)](#)

CONTACT US

Fields marked with an * are required

Name *

Email *

Park *

Message *

Submit



About the Park

South Higgins Lake State Park, on the south shore of Higgins Lake, features almost one mile of shoreline and provides 1,000 acres for recreation activities in a natural setting. Visitors can enjoy outdoor activities such as hiking, fishing, boating, swimming, and cross-country skiing. Its modern campground is the second largest in the state system, offering 400 sites.

About the Plan

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks & Recreation Division (PRD) is in the process of developing a General Management Plan for South Higgins Lake State Park. The General Management Plan will define a long-range planning and management strategy that protects the resources of the site while addressing recreation needs and opportunities. Stakeholder and public input will be incorporated as a critical component of the planning process.

The public input survey for South Higgins Lake State Park is now closed. Thank you for your participation!

Presentations and Meetings

A combined stakeholder input workshop for both North and South Higgins Lake State Parks was held on April 24, 2018 at the Ralph A. MacMullan Center in Roscommon, Michigan. [Click here to view the workshop summary.](#)

A public meeting will be held to solicit public comment on the park and the General Management Plan. Please check back here for information!

Maps

Click any image below for a downloadable .pdf.

The survey was broken down into several categories to gather targeted input:

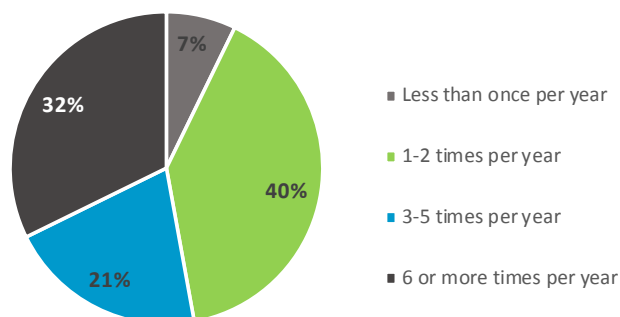
CATEGORY	INPUT RECEIVED
Your Visit	General information about when and how frequently users visit, and how they travel to the park
Activities	Questions pertaining to activities users participate in at the park
Overnight Accommodations	Whether the overnight accommodations meet the needs of users, and what was liked most and least
Day Use	Whether the day use facilities meet the needs of users and any other comments about the day use facilities
Special Events and Programs	What activities users participate in, and their opinions of them
Trails	Questions about trails in and around the park
Fishing	Preferred fishing location and method, targeted fish species, and any other comments about fishing
Hunting	Targeted species for trapping and hunting, and any other comments about hunting
User Satisfaction and General Comments	A rating of overall satisfaction with a recent visit and an explanation, how users describe the park, what changes could be made, and any other comments about the park or the plan process
Tell Us About Yourself	Demographic data

Your Visit

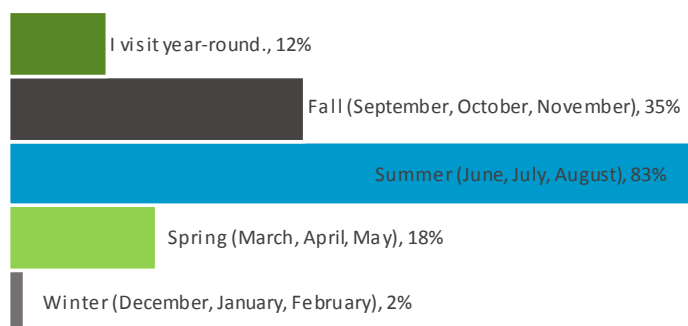
The survey responses indicate that visitors to South Higgins Lake State Park tend to most frequently visit the park one to two times per year (40%) or six or more times per year (32%), and another 20% of visitors come three to five times per year. Most respondents reported visiting mostly in the summer between the months of June and August (83%), with some people enjoying visiting in the fall (35%). The planning team was interested in knowing how visitors travel to South Higgins Lake State Park. Most of the respondents reported using a motorized vehicle (86%), which was defined by means of a car, truck, RV, or motorcycle. The next most common method was by motorized boat (32%).

Respondents were asked what three words they would use to describe the park to someone who had never visited. The top ten most common words were beautiful, clean, fun, busy, relaxing, nice, beach, large, crowded, and lake. The word cloud below shows the words that were mentioned three or more times, with the increasing size of the word designating a more frequent response.

How many times per year do you visit the park?



In what seasons do you typically visit the park?

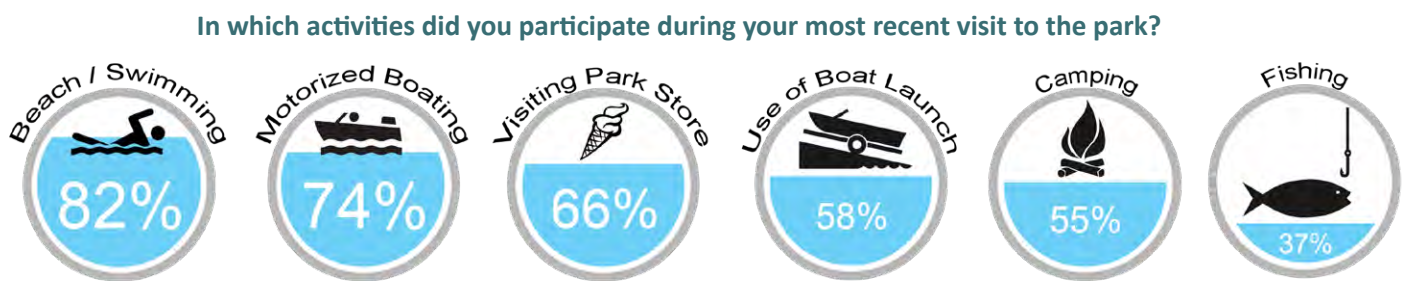




Word most frequently used to describe the park. More frequently mentioned words appear larger.

Activities

Visitors participate in a range of activities at South Higgins Lake State, with beach/swimming (82%) being the most common. Motorized boating (74%), visiting the park store (66%), use of the boat launch (58%), camping (55%), fishing (37%), and biking (35%) were the next top six most common activities that visitors participate in at South Higgins Lake State Park. Other notable activities that visitors participate in when they visit the park include hiking/trail running (33%), paddling (33%), using the pet friendly beach (33%), dog walking (32%), and picnicking (31%). Of these activities, respondents were asked to choose one activity that makes them choose to visit South Higgins Lake State Park. Overall, motorized boating (32%) was the top activity that makes respondents choose to visit the park, with camping (28%), and beach/swimming (15%) also bringing visitors to the park.



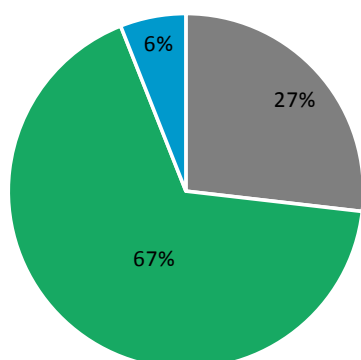
Overnight Accommodations

Most of the survey respondents noted that they use the overnight accommodations at South Higgins Lake State Park (70%). When staying the night at South Higgins Lake State Park, visitors tend to vary between staying for two to three nights (38%), staying for four to six nights (32%), and staying seven or more nights (24%). Of the 48 respondents that left comments, ten of them do not use the overnight accommodations because they or a family member own a nearby cabin/cottage. Those who do not use the overnight accommodations at the park tend to stay at their own second home (53%) or their own principal home (32%).

When asked to rate the overnight facilities on a scale of one to ten, with ten being the most favorable, 78% of respondents answered an eight or above, with the average answer being 8.3. Positive comments include that they love the park and its location on the water, that it is clean and well-maintained, that they enjoy the full hook-up sites, and that the park staff is friendly. Respondents reported some negative experiences including the campground being noisy and crowded, bathrooms that were not clean or that were in need of upgrades (such as the eastern shower building), an insufficient number of full-hookup sites, and issues with or fears of swimmer's itch.

When visitors stay at South Higgins Lake State Park, they also like to visit nearby attractions. Common responses include Nibbles Ice Cream store; Hartwick Pines State Park; North Higgins Lake State Park; nearby towns such as Roscommon, Grayling, and Houghton Lake; and nearby trails and golf courses.

Do the day-use facilities at South Higgins Lake State Park meet your needs?



■ I do not use these facilities. ■ Yes ■ No (please explain):

Day Use

Many of the survey respondents stated that the day use facilities meet their needs (67%), while 27% of respondents reported that the facilities were in some way inadequate (the remaining respondents do not use the day-use facilities). When asked why the facilities do not meet their needs, respondents indicated that the playground needs to be updated, the beaches/restrooms/campgrounds are dirty, and that the area could use more trash receptacles. Comments also showed that the park could use more picnic table and grills, as well as replacing a few of them.

Special Events and Programs

About 27% of survey respondents reported participating in a special event or program at the park. The most commonly cited programs were fall events, such as Halloween Fest, Fall Festival, and Harvest Fest. Other events that visitors have participated in include the Sunrise Run, explorer guide programs, fishing programs, Independence Day fireworks, and car shows. The majority of survey respondents' impressions of the events were positive, with 23 neutral or negative comments out of 215. Examples of some of the comments are below:

Program: Halloween Festival

"Great! We go every year and the whole family enjoys it. Wish there was more to do though to keep everyone entertained longer."

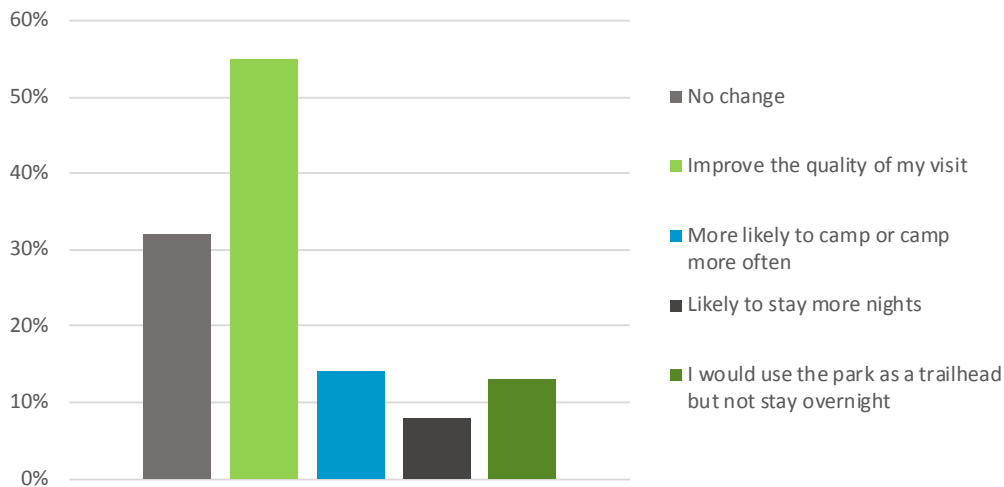
"It is well organized with lots of events for the kids. The outdoor haunted woods is always a hit. We love seeing how so many others decorate their campsite. Many of our friends that also live in the Higgins Lake/ Roscommon area also camp during the Halloween weekend."

Survey respondents had many suggestions for additional events or programs for the park. Survey respondents most frequently requested additional programs that were kid- or family-friendly, as well as additional recreation programs and classes, nature or conservation programs, or additional festivals.



Participants of a Basketball Clinic

The community is currently working on a regional bicycle trail.
How might this affect your visit to South Higgins Lake State Park?
(Check all that apply)



Trails

The survey asked participants if the trails at South Higgins Lake State Park meet their needs. Sixty-one percent of respondents reported that the trails meet their needs, while 31% do not use these facilities, and the remaining 8% described the trails as not meeting their needs. When asked to explain why the trails do not meet their needs, respondents indicated that they wish the trails were longer or more extensive. The comments also stated that visitors would enjoy a trail that circled around the lake. Other reasons that participants mentioned were that the trails needed to be cleaned up, branches need to be cleared, that they wish there were more paved trails, and that they think the Marl Lake trails could be improved upon.

When asked how the work regarding the regional bicycle trail would affect their visit to the park, most participants reported that it will improve the quality of their visit (55%), while others stated that it will not affect their visit (31%). Fourteen percent of respondents indicated that with the addition of the regional bicycle trail, they would be more likely to camp or would camp more often. Some participants also stated that they would use the park as a trailhead but would not stay the night (13%). Many respondents shared comments expressing positive feedback regarding the addition of the regional bike trail and were excited for it to be finished.

Fishing

More than half of the survey respondents do not utilize the state park for fishing access (67%). The most preferred location to fish is Higgins Lake (84%). A small percent of survey

respondents indicated that they enjoy fishing at Marl Lake (12%) and the Cut River (4%). Most respondents mentioned that they access the water for fishing by motorized boat (77%). Others reported that they fish from the shoreline (31%), ice fish (12%), or use a non-motorized boat (13%). The survey shows that when fishing, most are not fishing for a specific species (57%). The next most common species to fish for are yellow perch (37%), rock bass (20%), lake trout (20%), and northern pike (15%). The comments indicated that people also enjoy fishing for smallmouth bass.

Some comments related to fishing at the park include that fishing at the park is fun, but sometimes there can be conflicts with crowding from pleasure boaters, jet skis, or swimmers. Others mention that the perch are smaller than usual, or that brown trout should be stocked in the lake.

Hunting

Only 20 respondents (2%) reported hunting at South Higgins Lake State Park. However, this small number of respondents may not reflect the use of the area for hunting, but instead the distribution method of the survey. Those that do hunt typically target waterfowl (59%), white-tailed deer (41%), upland birds (23%), small game (23%), and wild turkey (11%). When asked to provide comments regarding their hunting/trapping experience at Marl Lake, participants expressed that the trails are helpful, and the game is challenging. One individual mentioned that it would be nice to have more access around the park for hunting.

User Satisfaction and General Comments

Visitors to South Higgins Lake State Park are generally satisfied with their visit. When asked to rank their most recent visit to the park on a scale of one to ten, with ten being most favorable, 60% of respondents rated their visit a nine or ten, with the average rating a 8.5. Some examples of comments, both positive and negative, include:

"It is a treasure that our family has enjoyed for seven generations. We meet there at the same time every year, coming from all across the country. Although the swim area is smaller, the sand is less, and the lifeguard stands are gone, very little else has changed. We love the fact that the park is such a solid, constant, family foundation in our lives."

"I think Marl lake needs some love in terms of trail upkeep, but otherwise I think the facilities are outstanding."

"I love the area and the beaches provided. I am concerned about the number and size of boats that are launched there. I also am concerned about the invasive species that arrive with these boats."

Survey respondents were asked what, if any, changes or improvements could be made to the park that would improve their experience. The suggestions were wide-ranging and covered many areas of the park as over five hundred comments were submitted. Recurring themes include:

- Boat wash improvements- staffed, heated water, or mandatory and enforced
- Additional full-hookup campsites
- Continued efforts to decrease swimmer's itch
- Restroom improvements- updated facilities or improved cleanliness
- Improved supervision and enforcement at the boat launch
- Improved beach area – larger beach, better maintained



An Explorer Guide Leads a Hike



Fishing on Higgins Lake



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF

NATURAL RESOURCES**- DNR NEWS -**

March 29, 2018

Contact: [Debbie Jensen](#), 517-284-6105

DNR seeks public input on North and South Higgins Lake state park general management plans



The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is seeking public input on new general management plans for both North Higgins Lake and South Higgins Lake state parks.

The public is invited to share their opinions and ideas via an online survey that is available through April 30. Links to the online survey will be available for South Higgins Lake State Park at michigan.gov/southhiggins and North Higgins Lake State Park at michigan.gov/northhiggins.

The general management plan will guide the future of the parks and will define a long-range (10- to 20-year) planning and management strategy that will assist the DNR in meeting its responsibilities to 1) protect and preserve the sites' natural and cultural resources, and 2)

provide access to land- and water-based public recreation and educational opportunities.

The online surveys are one of several opportunities for the public and stakeholders to be involved in the planning process. The DNR will also host a public open house later this year, providing an opportunity for review and comment on the draft plan.

North Higgins Lake State Park is located on the northern shore of Higgins Lake in Crawford County, approximately 12 miles south of the city of Grayling. The park is home to year-round camping, mini-cabins, a swimming beach and a boat launch, as well as land open to hunting, hiking, biking and cross-country skiing. The trails extend into the adjacent state forest land. A nearly two-mile section of paved trail for the biking route of the Iron Belle Trail was recently completed in the park. The park's 429 acres are also home to the Historic Higgins Lake Nursery and Civilian Conservation Corps Museum as well as the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center.

South Higgins Lake State Park is located on the southern shore of Higgins Lake in northern Roscommon County. The park features nearly a mile of shoreline of the park's popular 10,000-acre lake, nearly 400 campsites (including some full hook-up sites), a boat launch, a swimming beach and two pet-friendly areas along the water. In addition, Marl Lake provides more recreation opportunities, including paddling, boating, hunting and more than five miles of hiking trails that surround the lake.

Additional information on the DNR's management plan process can be found at michigan.gov/parkmanagementplans.

For more information about the management plan process, contact Debbie Jensen, DNR park management plan administrator, at 517-284-6105 (TTY/TDD711 Michigan Relay Center for the hearing impaired) or via email at JensenD1@michigan.gov.

/Note to editors: An accompanying photo is available below for download. Caption information follows.

HigginsLake: Both North Higgins Lake and South Higgins Lake state parks are located on Higgins Lake in Crawford and Roscommon counties. The public is invited to share their opinions and ideas via an online survey that is available through April 30./

- [HigginsLake.JPG](#)

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. For more information, go to www.michigan.gov/dnr.

[MANAGE SUBSCRIPTIONS](#) | [UNSUBSCRIBE ALL](#) | [CONTACT US](#) | [FEEDBACK](#) | [HELP](#)

This email was sent to phillipsk@michigan.gov using GovDelivery Communications Cloud on behalf of: Michigan Department of Natural Resources · Constitution Hall, 525 W. Allegan St., PO Box 30028 Lansing MI 48909 · 1-800-439-1420



South Higgins Lake State Park - General Management Plan

Public Input Survey

The purpose of this survey is to gather input from **South Higgins Lake State Park** visitors. Your answer will help the Michigan Department of Natural Resources develop a **General Management Plan** that will guide the future of the park.

This survey should take **less than 15 minutes** to complete. Your answers are **confidential**. Specific data will not be shared with any other parties unless you opt in to email notifications at the end of the survey.

At the end of the survey, you will be directed to the **project website** which provides additional information on the General Management Plan process and further opportunities for public review and comment.

To proceed with the survey, click the "Next" button.

Your Visit

* 1. Have you visited South Higgins Lake State Park in the past 5 years?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If no, what keeps you from visiting the park?

2. How many times per year do you visit South Higgins Lake State Park?

- ☐ Less than once per year
- ☐ 1-2 times per year
- ☐ 3-5 times per year
- ☐ 6 or more times per year

3. In what seasons do you typically visit the park?

- ☐ Winter (December, January, February)
- ☐ Spring (March, April, May)
- ☐ Summer (June, July, August)
- ☐ Fall (September, October, November)
- ☐ I visit year-round.

4. How do you travel to the park?

- ☐ Motorized vehicle (car/truck/RV/motorcycle)
- ☐ Bicycle
- ☐ Motorized Boat
- ☐ Non-motorized Boat
- ☐ Walk

Other:

5. What three words would you use to describe South Higgins Lake State Park to someone who has never visited the park?

First Word

Second Word

Third Word

Activities

6. Please check ALL the activities in which you participated at South Higgins Lake State Park during your most recent visits?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating on Higgins Lake (motorized) | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet friendly beach | <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-country skiing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paddling on Higgins Lake (canoeing/kayaking/etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> Visiting the park store | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoeing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use of boat launch at Higgins Lake | <input type="checkbox"/> Shelter/pavilion rental | <input type="checkbox"/> Dog walking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boat rentals from park store | <input type="checkbox"/> Hunting/trapping at Marl Lake | <input type="checkbox"/> Biking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use of boat wash | <input type="checkbox"/> Nature viewing/study | <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking/trail running |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating/paddling on Marl Lake | <input type="checkbox"/> Birding | <input type="checkbox"/> Camping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Picnicking | <input type="checkbox"/> Mini cabin rental |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ice fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Metal detecting | <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretive/nature/historical programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beach/swimming in Higgins Lake | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography | <input type="checkbox"/> Special events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | | |

7. What ONE activity makes you chose to visit South Higgins Lake State Park?

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Boating on Higgins Lake (motorized) | <input type="radio"/> Pet friendly beach | <input type="radio"/> Cross-country skiing |
| <input type="radio"/> Paddling on Higgins Lake (canoeing/kayaking/etc.) | <input type="radio"/> Visiting the park store | <input type="radio"/> Snowshoeing |
| <input type="radio"/> Use of boat launch at Higgins Lake | <input type="radio"/> Shelter/pavilion rental | <input type="radio"/> Dog walking |
| <input type="radio"/> Boat rentals from park store | <input type="radio"/> Hunting/trapping at Marl Lake | <input type="radio"/> Biking |
| <input type="radio"/> Use of boat wash | <input type="radio"/> Nature viewing/study | <input type="radio"/> Hiking/trail running |
| <input type="radio"/> Boating/paddling on Marl Lake | <input type="radio"/> Birding | <input type="radio"/> Camping |
| <input type="radio"/> Fishing | <input type="radio"/> Picnicking | <input type="radio"/> Mini cabin rental |
| <input type="radio"/> Ice fishing | <input type="radio"/> Metal detecting | <input type="radio"/> Interpretive/nature/historical programs |
| <input type="radio"/> Beach/swimming in Higgins Lake | <input type="radio"/> Photography | <input type="radio"/> Special events |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify) | | |

8. What other attractions do you visit in the area when you visit the State Park?

Type of Use

*** 9. Have you used South Higgins Lake State Park for overnight accommodations?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

Overnight Accommodations

10. How many nights do you typically stay per visit?

☐ 1 night

☐ 2 - 3 nights

☐ 4 - 6 nights

☐ 7 or more nights

Comments:

11. Please rank the overnight facilities at this state park on a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being the most favorable.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

12. What is the PRIMARY reason for your rating?

Non-Camper Overnight Accommodations

13. On your recent visit, where did you stay when you visited the park?

- ☐ Own principal home
- ☐ Own second home
- ☐ Another's home/second home
- ☐ Another state park
- ☐ State forest campground
- ☐ Another public campground (federal, county, township, etc)
- ☐ Private campground
- ☐ Hotel/motel/rental property/B&B
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Day-Use

14. Do the day-use facilities (picnic pavilion, grills, beach, playground equipment, parking, etc.) at South Higgins Lake State Park meet your needs?

- ☐ I do not use these facilities.
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No (please explain):

Special Events and Programs

15. Have you participated in a program or special event at South Higgins Lake State Park in the past? (For example, Halloween Fest, Explorer Guide Programs, basketball clinics)

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes - please describe which programs or events you attended.

16. What was your opinion of the program or event you attended?

17. What additional programs or events would you like to see in the future, if any?

Trails

18. Do the trails at South Higgins Lake State Park meet your needs?

☐ I do not use these facilities

☐ Yes

☐ No (please explain):

19. The community is currently working on a bicycle trail around Higgins Lake. How might this affect your visit to South Higgins Lake State Park? (Check all that apply)

☐ No change

☐ Improve the quality of my visit

☐ More likely to camp or camp more often

☐ Likely to stay more nights

☐ I would use the park as a trailhead but not stay overnight

☐ Other (please specify)

Fishing

*** 20. Do you utilize the State Park for fishing access?**

☐ Yes

☐ No

21. What is your preferred fishing location at South Higgins Lake State Park?

- ☐ Higgins Lake
- ☐ Marl Lake
- ☐ Cut River

22. How do you typically access the water for fishing? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Shoreline
- ☐ Ice
- ☐ Motorized boat
- ☐ Non-motorized boat
- ☐ Other (please specify)

23. What do you fish for at South Higgins Lake State Park? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No specific species | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock bass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lake trout | <input type="checkbox"/> Yellow perch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rainbow trout | <input type="checkbox"/> Rainbow smelt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lake whitefish | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern pike |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lake herring | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | |

24. Please provide any comments you may have regarding your fishing experience at South Higgins Lake State Park.

Hunting*** 25. Do you hunt/trap at Marl Lake?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

26. What do you hunt/trap? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ White-tailed deer
- ☐ Black bear
- ☐ Wild turkey
- ☐ Small-game
- ☐ Upland birds
- ☐ Waterfowl
- ☐ Fur harvesting
- ☐ Other (please specify)

27. Please provide any comments you may have regarding your hunting/trapping experience at Marl Lake.

User Satisfaction and General Comments

28. Using the scale below, please share how satisfied you were with your most recent visit to South Higgins Lake State Park, with 10 being the highest satisfaction:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

29. Please explain why you gave this rating.

30. What, if any, changes would you make to improve your experience at South Higgins Lake State Park?

30. What, if any, changes would you make to improve your experience at South Higgins Lake State Park?

31. Please share any other thoughts you may have on South Higgins Lake State Park and/or the management planning process.

32. (Optional) Share a photo of your experience at South Higgins State Park! By uploading a photo, you grant permission to the DNR to use the photo.

Choose File

No file
chosen

Tell Us About Yourself

This section will help the planning team understand who uses the park.

33. What is the ZIP code of your primary residence?

ZIP:

34. What is your age?

- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 18-29
- ☐ 30-39
- ☐ 40-49
- ☐ 50-64
- ☐ 65 or older
- ☐ I prefer not to answer.

35. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ I prefer not to answer.

36. If you would like to be informed with further information about the General Management Plan process and future meetings, please leave your contact info below:

Name

Email

Thank you!

Thank you for participating in the South Higgins Lake State Park General Management Plan survey! Your input is appreciated. Visit <http://mdnrmanagementplans.org/south-higgins-lake/> for more information!

B.3 Public Input Survey Results

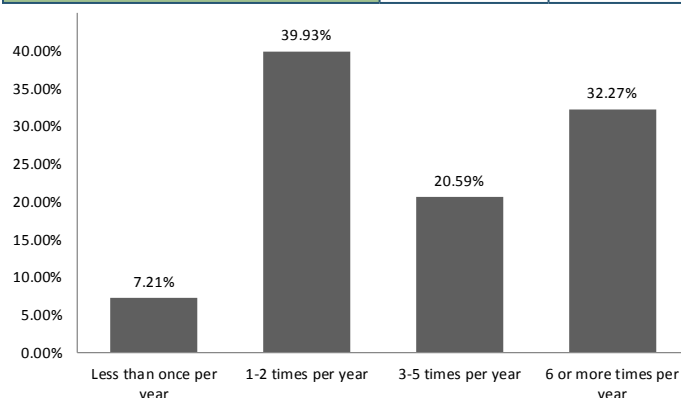
Q1: HAVE YOU VISITED SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK IN THE PAST 5 YEARS?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
YES	96.66%	925
NO	3.34%	32
IF NO, WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM VISITING THE PARK?		26
ANSWERED		957
SKIPPED		0

If no, what keeps you from visiting the park?

1. First for camping and now I am a home owner on the lake
2. Go to more rustic parks
3. Own property on the lake
4. I use the DNR launch. I keep my boat in a hoist all season
5. I use the DNR launch. I keep my boat in a hoist all season
6. Too many people making too much noise
7. Have a property on the lake.
8. Too crowded and am at the north end of the lake
9. Too many people and boats moored all over and swimmers itch.
10. Too many partys going on
11. I moved to Florida
12. Less outside the park stores, etc.
13. nothing
14. Swimmers itch!!
15. To much dirt
16. Time management
17. Distance
18. Moved to Florida
19. Water, store, ice cream
20. I have a home on the lake within view of the park
21. Don't camp anymore.
22. too crowded and not easy to get an RV parked
23. Sites too small & crammed together. Very loud
24. camping, boating and the surrounding area
25. Location, water
26. The lake

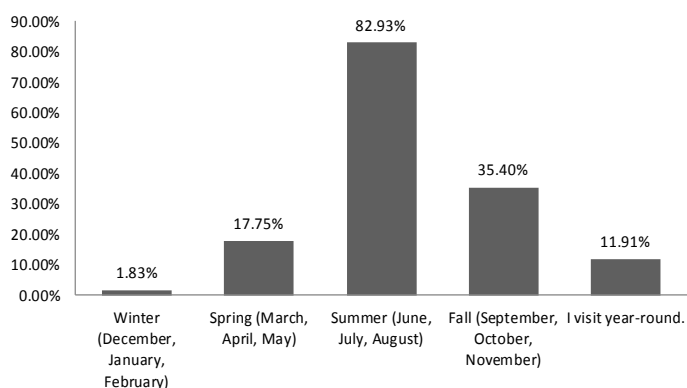
Q2: HOW MANY TIMES PER YEAR DO YOU VISIT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
LESS THAN ONCE PER YEAR	7.21%	63
1-2 TIMES PER YEAR	39.93%	349
3-5 TIMES PER YEAR	20.59%	180
6 OR MORE TIMES PER YEAR	32.27%	282
ANSWERED		874
SKIPPED		83



Q3: IN WHAT SEASONS DO YOU TYPICALLY VISIT THE PARK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
WINTER (DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY)	1.83%	16
SPRING (MARCH, APRIL, MAY)	17.75%	155
SUMMER (JUNE, JULY, AUGUST)	82.93%	724
FALL (SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER)	35.40%	309
I VISIT YEAR-ROUND.	11.91%	104
ANSWERED		873
SKIPPED		84



Q4: HOW DO YOU TRAVEL TO THE PARK?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
MOTORIZED VEHICLE (CAR/TRUCK/RV/MOTORCYCLE)	86.03%	751
BICYCLE	6.19%	54
MOTORIZED BOAT	32.65%	285
NON-MOTORIZED BOAT	2.41%	21
WALK	6.99%	61
OTHER:		6
ANSWERED		873
SKIPPED		84

Q5: WHAT THREE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK TO SOMEONE WHO HAS NEVER VISITED THE PARK?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
FIRST WORD	100.00%	807
SECOND WORD	98.76%	797
THIRD WORD	95.04%	767
ANSWERED		807
SKIPPED		150

Mode of Transport	Percentage
Motorized vehicle...	86.03%
Bicycle	6.19%
Motorized Boat	32.65%
Non-motorized Boat	2.41%
Walk	6.99%

1. Boat
2. Snowmobile
3. Bike
4. PWC
5. I am a Higgins Lake resident
6. Boat



Q6: PLEASE CHECK ALL THE ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU PARTICIPATED AT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK DURING YOUR MOST RECENT VISITS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
BOATING ON HIGGINS LAKE (MOTORIZED)	73.99%	623
PADDLING ON HIGGINS LAKE (CANOEING/KAYAKING/ETC.)	33.37%	281
USE OF BOAT LAUNCH AT HIGGINS LAKE	57.96%	488
BOAT RENTALS FROM PARK STORE	8.19%	69
USE OF BOAT WASH	19.24%	162
BOATING/PADDLING ON MARL LAKE	10.81%	91
FISHING	37.05%	312
ICE FISHING	7.13%	60
BEACH/SWIMMING IN HIGGINS LAKE	82.30%	693
PET FRIENDLY BEACH	33.25%	280
VISITING THE PARK STORE	66.63%	561
SHELTER/PAVILION RENTAL	6.77%	57
HUNTING/TRAPPING AT MARL LAKE	1.54%	13
NATURE VIEWING/STUDY	26.37%	222
BIRDING	6.06%	51
PICNICKING	31.24%	263
METAL DETECTING	2.14%	18
PHOTOGRAPHY	29.57%	249
CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING	4.75%	40
SNOWSHOEING	2.49%	21
DOG WALKING	31.95%	269
BIKING	35.63%	300
HIKING/TRAIL RUNNING	33.73%	284
CAMPING	55.58%	468
MINI CABIN RENTAL	1.43%	12
INTERPRETIVE/NATURE/HISTORICAL PROGRAMS	3.56%	30
SPECIAL EVENTS	11.76%	99
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	6.65%	56
ANSWERED		842
SKIPPED		115

Other (please specify):

1. played horseshoes
2. Sail boating
3. Sightseeing

4. stopping for ice cream at the park store-a favorite!
5. camp fires
6. Paddle cut river
7. Halloween camping
8. rest rooms
9. snorkeling
10. Geocaching
11. I'm a local resident and use the boat launch in spring and fall
12. Playground
13. Play on play equipment
14. Great fun
15. sailing
16. restrooms
17. I have home an boat on the south part of higgins lake
18. Walking
19. Walking
20. Snowmobiling
21. We have used the Wi Fi at the park store.
22. visiting campers
23. Fishing at marl lake
24. Scuba diving and snorkeling
25. Sunrise Run
26. Na
27. Basketball clinic/camp
28. swimming
29. Basketball programming
30. Have cottage nearby and love going to the park especially long walks
31. Graduation party
32. Movie Nights Under the Stars
33. Geocaching
34. Outdoor movie nights
35. geocaching
36. October fest
37. Halloween
38. Kid activities while camping
39. Geocaching
40. Zumba on the beach
41. Boat washing
42. Have been camping at S Higgin's Lake for over 50 years.
43. 4th of July Bike Ride (I'm the Guy)
44. Halloweekends
45. host programs
46. Harvest festival

47. Walking the loops
48. Sailing on Higgins Lake
49. Live ~ 5 miles away at the park alot.
50. 4 Wheeling
51. really enjoy trails at Marl
52. Nibbles Ice Cream
53. Walking on paths
54. Cram sailing regatta
55. color walk. I know I said quiet, and that is not something experienced at high summer times.
56. CRAM Sailing event

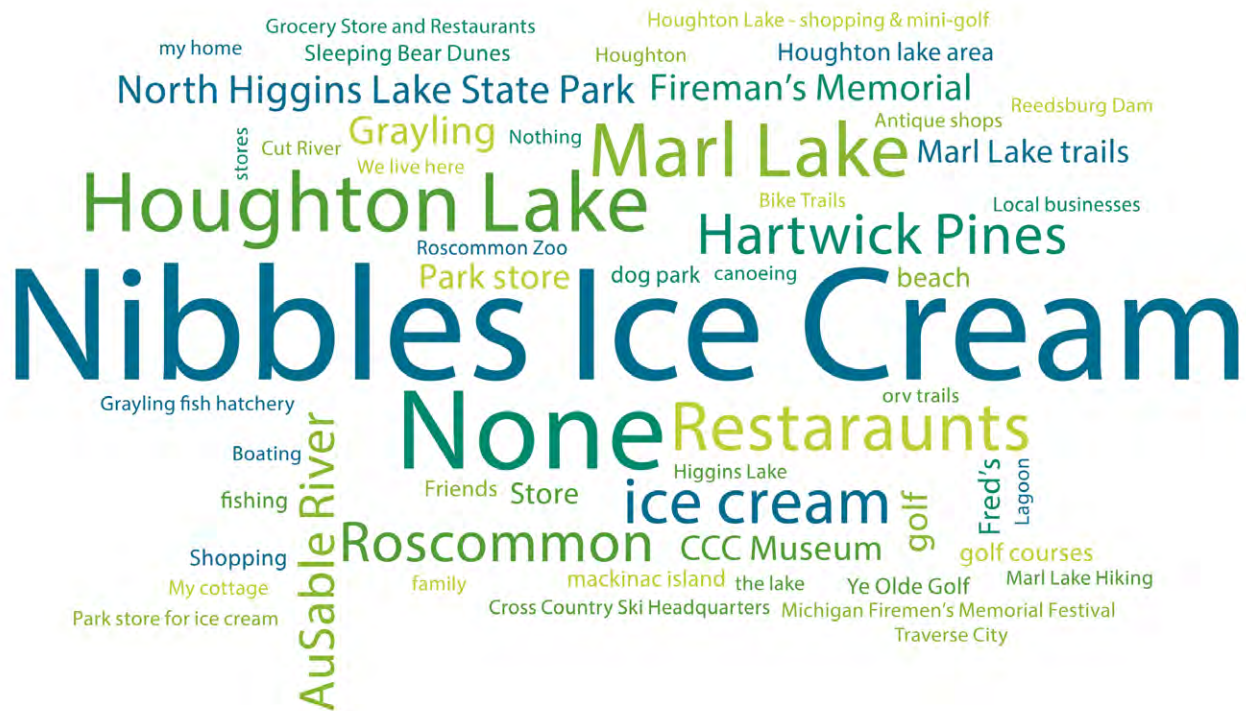
MINI CABIN RENTAL	0.12%	1
INTERPRETIVE/NATURE/HISTORICAL PROGRAMS	0.00%	0
SPECIAL EVENTS	1.92%	16
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	3.61%	30
ANSWERED		832
SKIPPED		125

Other (please specify):

1. Marl lake paddling and hiking
2. have a home nearby, walk beach
3. Playground
4. Own property on the lake
5. Parking with others in of park, view
6. Winter
7. Just camping there in general, boating and fishing are a bonus
8. Proximity
9. Fishing at marl lake
10. Family tradition
11. It's just that it's one of my favorite parks
12. we live locally and love walking and stopping for icecream on a summer evening. Watching sunsets. Our dog loves Marl Lake and the paths around it.
13. Boating to SHLSP for the store
14. Na
15. location
16. Group goes every year
17. Firemen's Memorial
18. It is close to home which makes it nice for day trips to the beach.
19. 4th of july
20. geocaching
21. Fireman's festival weekend in September
22. we often boat to the camp store for ice cream cones
23. Camping 4th of July with our children and grandchildren
24. Lake access..relaxation
25. Sailing on Higgins Lake
26. 4 Wheeling
27. Looking for property
28. I live in Roscommon and it's close to home to last minute camp
29. Cram sailing regatta
30. CRAM Sailing event

Q7: WHAT ONE ACTIVITY MAKES YOU CHOSE TO VISIT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK?

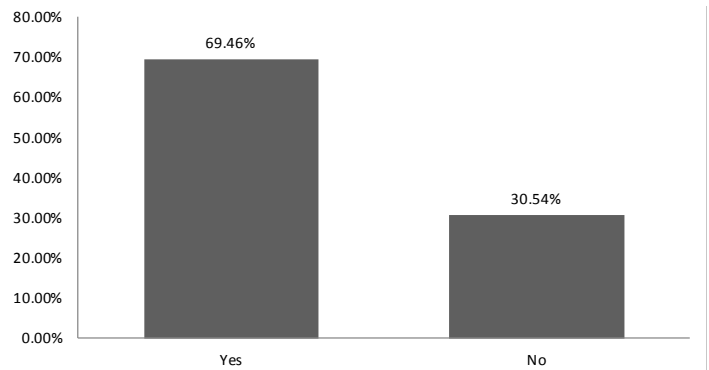
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
BOATING ON HIGGINS LAKE (MOTORIZED)	31.49%	262
PADDLING ON HIGGINS LAKE (CANOEING/KAYAKING/ETC.)	1.32%	11
USE OF BOAT LAUNCH AT HIGGINS LAKE	8.17%	68
BOAT RENTALS FROM PARK STORE	0.12%	1
USE OF BOAT WASH	0.24%	2
BOATING/PADDLING ON MARL LAKE	0.00%	0
FISHING	0.72%	6
ICE FISHING	0.12%	1
BEACH/SWIMMING IN HIGGINS LAKE	15.38%	128
PET FRIENDLY BEACH	2.28%	19
VISITING THE PARK STORE	2.16%	18
SHELTER/PAVILION RENTAL	0.24%	2
HUNTING/TRAPPING AT MARL LAKE	0.00%	0
NATURE VIEWING/STUDY	0.60%	5
BIRDING	0.00%	0
PICNICKING	0.60%	5
METAL DETECTING	0.12%	1
PHOTOGRAPHY	0.00%	0
CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING	0.36%	3
SNOWSHOEING	0.12%	1
DOG WALKING	0.60%	5
BIKING	0.24%	2
HIKING/TRAIL RUNNING	1.56%	13
CAMPING	27.88%	232



Q8: Most frequently visited area attractions. More frequently mentioned attractions appear larger.

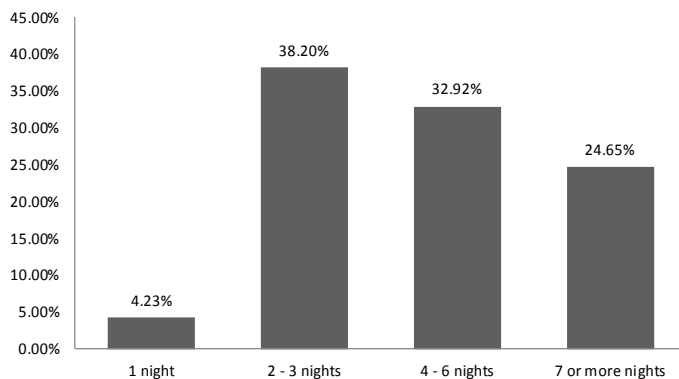
Q8: WHAT OTHER ATTRACTIONS DO YOU VISIT IN THE AREA WHEN YOU VISIT THE STATE PARK?	
ANSWERED	538
SKIPPED	419

Q9: HAVE YOU USED SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK FOR OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
YES	69.46%	589
NO	30.54%	259
ANSWERED		848
SKIPPED		109



Q10: HOW MANY NIGHTS DO YOU TYPICALLY STAY PER VISIT?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
1 NIGHT	4.23%	24
2 - 3 NIGHTS	38.20%	217
4 - 6 NIGHTS	32.92%	187
7 OR MORE NIGHTS	24.65%	140
COMMENTS:		48
ANSWERED		568
SKIPPED		389



Comments:

1. Tent camping is becoming more difficult at this park-primarily due to lack of water runoff control
2. 4 times a year, Been coming here for over 35 years!
3. We camp 15 consecutive nights each year, plus another weekend trip.
4. love your mini cabin....wish there were more
5. Harvest fest only
6. I have only camped at the park once.
7. Been a long time since we've stayed at campground. Own a place now.
8. We used the state park to camp until we bough a cottage with deeded lake access.
9. Live here
10. We have a cottage now at Higgins lake, and havn't stayed overnight for some time now.
11. Was years ago before we got own cottage
12. it was a few years ago.
13. I don't anymore. Bought a house on the lake.
14. None in recent years in
15. lovely campsite area with trees if reserved soon enough
16. visit via boat
17. Zero
18. Family stays there
19. Before we purchased home we camped at South Park for 2 weeks for 10 years in a row. Children then left home and moved on.
20. Many times we have stayed 7 nights as well.
21. Level of maintenance and cleanliness of the park has seen a decline in the last couple years
22. My family has property with Home up there within 7 miles of the state park but during the summertime we always try to camp at South Higgins Lake State Park
23. Family members sometimes stay here when visiting or for park events
24. Varies.
25. 2 weeks usually
26. Na
27. Stay with friends for a night.
28. When we used to camp with our kids we would spend the week.
29. Live by Higgins and boat at the marina.
30. Was nice
31. We travel from Ohio so we stay 14 nights
32. We camp for 2 weeks with a group of about 100. We've been coming for over 30 years.
33. Our family has been camping in the park every year since 1971. We traditionally stay the 15 day limit
34. Too crowded and packed in with boats
35. It is getting expensive to stay too many night...perhaps consider a buy 3, get one free thing
36. We would like full hook up on site 470
37. We love the full hook-up campsites
38. Fall fest
39. Very unpleasant
40. family members camp at the park
41. Capmping in the past
42. Revisit your RSVP system as it does not make sense that there are so many empty campground sites when your website says there is no availability.
43. camp in pop up
44. Camping vacations are what enticed us to buy/retire here
45. It's our favorite spot in all of beautiful Michigan!
46. been camping at south HL for over 40 years
47. We have a large group of us that typically come annually for 5 nights.
48. We have been spending our vacations there for the last 42 years.

Q11 & 12: PLEASE RATE THE OVERNIGHT FACILITIES AT THIS STATE PARK ON A SCALE FROM 1-10 WITH 10 BEING THE MOST FAVORABLE. WHAT IS THE PRIMARY REASON FOR YOUR RATING?

ANSWERED	473
SKIPPED	484

RATING	PRIMARY REASON
10	Very clean, quiet park
10	(no response)
10	We've been reserving the same site for years and we like that location.
10	Safe
10	Love this place
10	Cleanliness amenities
10	(no response)
10	The park is clean. We like staying at Michigan state parks because we know they are maintained well and typically have nice bathrooms. Also have family friendly environments.
10	The state park is always well kept and clean.
10	Great, clean, good restrooms close
10	Love Higgins lake
10	love the park
10	Clean, no bugs
10	Love the camping
10	That's how we remember it !!
10	(no response)
10	Clean facility & Beautiful Clean Lake
10	Well maintained
10	favorite park and waterway
10	well maintained
10	Love camping here.
10	Had everything needed and spectacular lake frontage
10	(no response)
10	Amenities and upkeep
10	Cleanliness
10	Clean and friendly
10	Cleanliness
10	location on Higgins Lake
10	Nice, well kept campground
10	(no response)
10	Best bathrooms,best beach,best trees on campsites, best boat launch.
10	Beautiful area
10	Enjoy the mini cabin

10	The lake is crystal clear. The park offers two dog beaches. We feel safe and observe that the park is patrolled by park rangers.
10	Cleanliness
10	Its an great place ,friendly people etc
10	large sites
10	Clean and accommodating
10	Family friendly
10	(no response)
10	Close to water
10	Bigger sites
10	nice, big, well maintained campsites
10	nice clean park
10	No reason... just love the park. I absolutely HATE THE site specific reservation system though
10	clean
10	Never had a bad experience here
10	Nice lots.
10	Relaxing family time in a very beautiful campground
10	Great campsite and facilities
10	(no response)
10	Takes care of all of my needs.
10	Friendly park...very helpful
10	Clean Restrooms
10	We have so much fun
10	Higgins Lake is the best inland lake in the world!
10	Cleanliness
10	Cleanliness
10	Love the full hookup sites
10	Haven't had any problems and everyone is so kind and helpful
10	We used to camp there in the 1950s through 2017.
10	The clean bathrooms
10	(no response)
10	Friendly staff, clean facilities.
10	Everything is always well maintained.
10	Bathroom & showers
10	It's the truth
10	Beautiful setting
10	(no response)
10	Outstanding facilities
10	Park and restrooms are clean, employees are friendly and helpful, and the lake calls us back annually.
10	(no response)
10	Everything is close, it's a beautiful, clean park.love harvest fest camping
10	Very clean bathrooms
10	nice

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

10	(no response)
10	Close to home
10	Love it there Clean
10	Because South Higgins lake state park has amazing staff and the best harvest festival
10	Fall colors and beautiful lake
10	Enjoyed. Last minute camping
10	Have never had a bad experience at this campground
10	Large sites
10	Clean and friendly
10	(no response)
10	Relaxing
10	Mostly large camping sites and full Hook-Ups available.
10	
10	Mostly large camping sites and full hookups available
10	Clean & friendly
10	(no response)
10	It's very well taken care of
10	Very clean bathrooms and professional staff
10	Love the beach and layout of the park
10	I have visited this campground every year since I was 9....we love everything about it
10	Clean and dog beach
10	Sites are pretty large, easy access to the water
10	Boating
10	(no response)
10	Clear water
10	Beautiful camping and beach setting. Crystal clear water.
10	Cleanliness
10	I take my daughters here every Father's Day for camping. It is truly a special place for us. Camping, swimming, fishing, so many great family memories. It's truly a beautiful place.
10	Cleanliness of camping area, restrooms and lake.
10	Camping on the lakefront sites make things convenient with the kids and also love the scenery. Full hook up sites when available are a bonus
10	Beach is close
10	Always clean
10	The campground is a wonderful place.
10	The park feels private and clean
10	The campsites are nice
10	Very clean, well patrolled
10	campsites
10	Full hookup
10	Full hook-up sites, beautiful lake for swimming & boating.

10	Always happy..never had any complaints
10	Beautiful lake, South State has good facilities. Alternate between South and North state on a year-by-year basis
10	Has everything we need
10	(no response)
10	Campsite was spotless upon arrival and the bathrooms were clean and well kept
10	It's right on the lake.
10	(no response)
10	(no response)
10	Peaceful and secure
10	Clean bathrooms, clean park, friendly staff
10	just love the park
10	Great park and the best lake in the state
10	Quality of water access
10	Multiple dump stations
10	South Higgins Lake State Park is my absolute favorite campground. We vacation here for a little over a week every summer.
10	(no response)
10	We're a family of campers. This park is beautiful.
10	Clean large lots and quiet at night.
10	Love the full hook-up option for our longer stays.
10	can relax there.
10	It is a beautiful campground nestled in the hardwoods with views of the lake. The modern restroom facilities built in the early 2000's in the park are a plus as is the expanded RV dump station.
10	(no response)
10	We love camping there as a family! Perfect setting.
10	never a bad camp site
10	The park is clean and the bathrooms are updated. The beach is soft sand, not rocks. The dog beach is great. The toys are perfect for our kids
10	The lake family tradition
10	We love this park! The water is beautiful and the beach is nice! We really love the FULL HOOK-UP SITES!
10	I like the campsites and never have any issues with them specifically
10	The park is absolutely beautiful
10	Been coming here for over 40 years. I wouldn't have done that if I didn't think it was great
10	Love the full hookup lots and campfire area on our lots.
10	We really enjoy coming to this park. I LOVE reserving the FULL HOOK-UP SITES! We are all about using our fifth wheel since you pay so much for them.
10	Clean, well managaged, family friendly

APPENDIX B

10	I love how many trees are in the park
10	clean restrooms and showers
10	Clean
10	overall it's one of Michigans best state parks, and the Lake is unmatched
10	(no response)
10	Everything is quiet and clean.
10	Very clean and updated facilities compared to most campgrounds
9	No night staff/security.
9	Facilities are great
9	Clean restrooms and showers
9	Large campsite
9	Great location
9	(no response)
9	cleanliness
9	nice grounds with tall shady trees
9	(no response)
9	Very clean park and accommodating
9	Beach and boat launch
9	Boat launch easy access
9	(no response)
9	(no response)
9	Clean
9	(no response)
9	Clear water boating
9	nice campground
9	Compared to other parks
9	(no response)
9	The setting of the campsite we have selected for a very long time. Close to the water.
9	Clean
9	Bathrooms by boat launch can get pretty nasty.
9	Because I have a cottage on Higgins Lake, we love to show off the beautiful lake. Sometimes it is embarrassing to see so much duck poop though
9	The Lake
9	Very nice camp sites.
9	They are clean and easy to access
9	Very nice rest rooms and showers seem to have hot water most of the time, nice size campsites
9	Restrooms are generally clean, campsites are large, modern, and clean
9	Beautiful location, great campground
9	some sites have good water views
9	Clean facility.
9	Regular maintenance
9	Overall condition
9	Nice campground
9	Cleanliness

9	(no response)
9	Nice facilities. Mostly clean and well maintained. Needs more parking for vehicles.
9	meeting friends we have met over the years.
9	(no response)
9	Love the use of the full hook up sites
9	(no response)
9	(no response)
9	Nice, mostly level sites.
9	Great beach
9	Large sites with beautiful views
9	(no response)
9	Overall, the facilities are clean and updated, but the campground still has some of the older-style restrooms.
9	(no response)
9	Wish there were a few more sites with water hook-up near the restrooms. Shower temperature in most showers either hot or cold- not a whole lot of in-between. We usually find one or two showers each year that the water temp. is acceptable and sometimes wait in line to use those showers.
9	Mostly clean
9	bathrooms need more upkeep
9	(no response)
9	Friendly employees! Night crew is very funny and helpful! Great guys!
9	Dirt camping spots
9	Clean, friendly park enjoyable for almost everyone.
9	clean restrooms, nice sites
9	The park is beautiful but sometimes the bathrooms are not clean (totally understandable especially when you consider how many people use them).
9	Great restrooms, clean adequate size sites
9	(no response)
9	I know it's in the plan, but one bathroom is out of date.
9	Would be a 10 if all the sites had water hookups
9	Ok phys.
9	Enjoyable family vacations
9	Pleasant stay, relaxing atmosphere and fantastic water!
9	Happy with accommodations just wish there were more full hook up sites
9	Love the park and the facilities. Some sites really hold water, would love to see those areas built up
9	(no response)
9	Campsites are nice, pet friendly, lots of trees, close to lake
9	We stay in our camper
9	Very nice park

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

9	large lots and adherence to quite hours
9	It's a nice park.
9	nice park and beautiful lake
9	Comfort
9	It's close to home and it's a nice park.
9	(no response)
9	(no response)
9	Some sites in south Higgins east loop do flood or get rather muddy with rainfall. Some asphalt parking pads may be helpful on some sites. The heavy use does kill the grass ground cover- not much can be done about that.
9	Bathrooms/showers in reasonable distance, closed for cleaning at weird times though
9	facilities are clean and functional
9	Not many trees for shade
9	Always clean, there are nice sized lots where you don't feel on top of other people. I dislike that hot water is sometimes hard to come by and that there aren't water outlets in more various places on the roads
9	Newer clean facilities
9	sloppy people
9	(no response)
9	Excellent facilities, but need more full hookup sites.
9	old bathroom facilities near boat launch
9	Would like full hook up on site 470 and those around it for my friends.
9	Clean facilities
9	Bathrooms are usually always clean, just would be nice to have more
9	(no response)
9	Bathrooms are usually clean. Campsites are nice
9	The updated restrooms
9	
9	10 except campsites not always level and dry
9	Spacious sites
9	Good bathhouses and hot showers
9	Love Higgins Lake
9	(no response)
9	the proximity to the lake
9	Scenic. Not hugely spacious
9	modern bathrooms
9	Bathroom and showers are newer/nice
9	Clean. Nice
9	(no response)
9	camping , showers & restrooms
9	Love the large area provided for mini-cabin
9	(no response)
9	Nice place to visit in the spring and fall

9	(no response)
9	Our family has come to S. or N. Higgins parks for over 40 years for an annual camping trip. We also have a cottage in Crawford. The campground being right on the lake is very beautiful and unique.
9	Love this park! However, not all bathroom facilities have been updated. Unfortunately, the sites that we like are in an area with an older bathroom which isn't always enjoyable to use.
9	You can never have a clean enough bathroom.
9	Clean bathrooms
9	Large, tree lined sites, close to water
9	If it is working and cleanliness
9	Clean and fun campground
9	(no response)
9	Comparable to other state parks in Michigan
9	(no response)
9	Clean restrooms
9	The bathrooms are always clean, the people are always nice. Sometimes the sun is a bit much but you can choose to be out of it. We always seem to catch a night where someone gets arrested; that's kind of entertaining but is kinda unfavorable at the same time.
9	Modern restrooms/showers
9	Nice clean bathrooms and large camp sites.
9	Overhaul and updating of the park due to the extra \$10 fee has been shown at SHLSP. Thank you!
9	(no response)
9	We just enjoy this park. Our favorite!
9	I would give it a 10 if there were more full hookup sites available.
9	(no response)
9	enjoy the full hookup sites, restrooms are clean.
9	Great showers
9	The full hookup sites are an awesome feature, the restrooms are nice also, I know the last old one is being replaced this fall then the place will be absolutely awesome.
8	Cleanliness
8	The noise of other campers and their RVs around us in the campground during the night made it less than ideal for a natural experience.
8	Cleanliness and well working bathrooms and showers.
8	(no response)
8	(no response)
8	Proximity to our families and the lake.
8	bathrooms need some updating
8	Location
8	It's a party park, so don't go there for peace & quiet

APPENDIX B

8	The love of the lake
8	Clean and rangers are very curtious and helpful
8	Clean, kept up bathroom facilities. Nice campsites.
8	Bathrooms are okay, but the sites are too congested. I don't like being so close to other campers.
8	Clean
8	Clean
8	Everything is well kept up.
8	Gross bathrooms
8	Somewhat crowded
8	Park store is to expensive and not alot of choices so I go out of the park for items.
8	great facilities
8	Sanding floors and smell in the Bathrooms could be better
8	It's been years since I camped there. I can't give it a bad rating nor great. It was adequate when I stayed there before.
8	nice hot shower!
8	Its not free...too many people, weeds in lagoon, swimmers itch, though much better last Summer.
8	(no response)
8	Campground
8	(no response)
8	(no response)
8	Cleanliness
8	Restrooms should be cleaner
8	(no response)
8	Bathrooms are always an issue. When you need to use them they are closed for cleaning.
8	(no response)
8	Some of the older bathrooms could use some updating & more frequent cleaning.
8	too many people make it noisy and trash all over
8	Some sites are very slow to drain water during prolonged rain storms.
8	(no response)
8	Not cleaned well a mess by Sunday
8	Good campsites and facilities. Great Lake.
8	Would be higher but sometimes crowded.prefer more natural.
8	(no response)
8	beautiful lake
8	rest rooms are small when the park is filled
8	Restrooms by Sites 11,13,15, that I stay on, need an upgrade.
8	(no response)
8	Good amount of sites with good location, but it can feel pretty crammed depending on where you're at.
8	Clean, normally quiet.

8	allway room for improvement
8	(no response)
8	(no response)
8	Shower heads could be kept up better.
8	(no response)
8	very nice park but also very busy
8	Cleanliness
8	Clean and well maintained
8	it would be a 10 if they had a no dogs allowed rule or at least put campers with dogs in their own section away from kids and campers that are annoyed by a constantly barking dog and dog feces.
8	Normally clean
8	Lots small on some
8	Beautiful park with all things for comfortable camping
8	Always clean
8	Very nice campground, needs more full service hookups
8	(no response)
8	There is always room for improvement
8	Clean and well kept
8	Great campsites
8	For the most part the facilities are clean
8	It's clean
8	I would give it a 10 but the swimmers itch.
8	Enjoyed it.
8	Bathrooms are well kept and mostly clean
8	(no response)
8	Great location, but quite muddy is some campsites.
8	Knowledge of the park.
8	(no response)
8	It would be a ten, but there's too many dead branches that have caused damage to cars and campers.
8	(no response)
8	(no response)
8	I wish all the bathrooms were redone and updated, then I'd give it a 10.
8	Bath house doesn't always have hot water.
8	It used to be 10, however, there appears to be a decline within the last few years in the maintaining of the buildings and grounds.
8	Overall very nice. Showers could be warmer
8	The view
8	Love the campground some improvements needed
8	Some sites flood

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

8	I would give it a 10 if the bathrooms were a little cleaner and if all the campsites had a full hook up option
8	Clean
8	noisy, firepits full, teens running around after 11, not enough patrols
8	The last campsite was hard to get our trailer in even though it was rated for our size. There was a big drop off from the pavement to the dirt which compounded the issue. Also there are so many people packed in there during the summer is gets crowded & smokey.
8	Cleanliness of bathrooms and park. Beautiful lake
8	(no response)
8	facilities are nice
8	Good Facilities, crowded campground.
8	Would love to see more full hook-up sites. The ones there book up fast
8	Nice, slightly above average state park campground
8	Nice bathroom
8	(no response)
8	It would be higher if there was a area set aside where quite time was later
8	(no response)
8	Fun
8	noisy at night
8	(no response)
8	Would have given a 10 if there were more minicabins available.
8	Lack of grass on campsite (dirty when rains) and lack of water hookups at campsites
8	Bathrooms need more frequent care
8	More bathrooms closer to campsites
8	(no response)
8	Bathrooms could be cleaner
8	Good site sizes, lack of privacy.
8	Sights are a little small. RV's are bigger now and require more room. Campers also park on edge of road making for narrow passes and blind spots for children to run out from. People sometimes drive way to fast thru Park .
8	I have a larger unit and I ask for full hookups, and of course being new to pulling a trailer as big as mine more pull through sites would be a big plus for me.
8	(no response)
8	The campground and the water are nice. The showers are cold and it sucks.
8	Bathrooms tend to get dirty
8	older bathrooms
8	Bathrooms usually clean and in good working order

8	like it best excepts when it's crowed and they force me into a tight site, which they seem to do quite often even though other sites are empty
8	I have been visiting Higgins Lake since I was a child. It was our family vacation every year. I'm 35 and now take my entire family. The only problems I see is swimmers itch
8	(no response)
8	Location and beauty of the Lake
8	(no response)
8	Fun setting for families
8	Good updated restrooms with good cleaning schedule. Step above most car-camping places
8	Would like to have more full hookup sites
8	The eastern most modern bathroom facility building is outdated.
8	(no response)
8	could use at least one more bath house for the quantity of guests staying in the park.
8	Some lots flood; un-level spots; when Park is busy it can be difficult to park motorhome
8	Nice lots, nice lake and beach.
8	Nice park
8	(no response)
8	Most sites are nice, would like more full hookup sites, and more level sites/larger sites
8	I appreciate State parks, as they are owned by the people of Michigan. A 10 would have more spacious lots.
8	need more showers
8	quiet
8	Location
8	well maintained, but a bit noisy, need to monitor big groups, college kid groups
8	The campsites get a lot of use and it can show. It feels like staffing has been cut back and the restrooms and showers could be cleaner and better maintained
8	Nice campsites
8	(no response)
8	Clean and adequate restrooms. Not enough water taps
8	Very good, but drainage in the campground has been an ongoing problem. Unelevel sites are also a concern.
8	Would like more lots with full hook-up
8	It's one of the best parks out there. It's perfect for a slightly louder crowd.
8	Nice sites & bathrooms
8	Wish there were more sites with water hook-up but close to restrooms. Shower water temperature not very reliable. Swimmer's itch can be a problem.

APPENDIX B

8	Showers are limited, and sometimes dirty. Cleanliness could be improved in showers and bathrooms.
8	Would like more full hook up sites and improving the roads
8	Love this park and lake
8	Great atmosphere, spacious lots
8	Bathrooms are clean, but need more stalls, showers, bath buildings in the over night camping area
8	The park is really clean and the park rangers and staff are polite and helpful. The bathrooms are clean and well taken care of.
8	Very nice lot sizes, many with shade and also close to the beach.
8	(no response)
8	The availability of full hookups and the well maintained campsites
8	(no response)
8	I enjoy the park. It seems a little crowded compared to state parks in other states. Last year our fire ring was filled with trash and metal cans from the last group there. I wish that someone (host or staff) would inspect the sites after each us and charge \$ to the pigs that leave the sites a mess for the next group to clean up. In Florida state parks a host inspects each site before next camper arrives. They even clean out the fire rings.
8	Somewhat expensive for just electric
8	Clean and modern facilities in relation to other parks, nice camp sites
8	The campground can be busy, there are a LOT of dogs, and people can be loud. The boat area can have large boats playing obscene music loud enough for children to hear. The bathroom we usually camp by is outdated, but looks like it is scheduled to be upgraded this year.
8	Facilities are clean and most are fairly up to date
7	(no response)
7	roads
7	(no response)
7	(no response)
7	Access to Lake.
7	Loud people camping during quiet time
7	(no response)
7	Usually clean and roomy sites
7	The beautiful lake,
7	Bathrooms
7	?
7	(no response)
7	it is above average and we like the boat launch and boat wash
7	Crowded but nice
7	Loud noise

7	The place isn't perfect but it's pretty good
7	Old restroom on east end of park
7	It used to be 9 or 10 out of 10 until the last couple of years where I have observed a downward trend in what used to be a strong point for the park: bathroom and park cleanliness. This is a big disappointment to me. Also, the staff has become much less friendly and helpful. I have filled out multiple surveys asking for a return email or phone call but have never received one, which I find also very disappointing
7	Dirt/dirty sites. More grass would be great!
7	Campground facilities
7	(no response)
7	Great wooded area but sites are small and not many lakefront sites
7	(no response)
7	Need more full hook up and still need bathrooms updated
7	(no response)
7	holiday weekend
7	(no response)
7	(no response)
7	Would like showers, nicer restrooms, more sports play area
7	(no response)
7	I don't completely understand the question. We have our travel trailer and may only use the restroom over night.
7	Bathhouses could use an update. Last few times we have went the beach has been closed because of swimmers itch.
7	Showers can be kind of gross
7	I have been to other campground where the shower and restrooms are better kept, however this is close to the top.
7	bathrooms could be cleaned more often and stronger smelling sanitizer should be used.
7	(no response)
7	10 for campsites and beach, facilities could be better.
7	old, poorly maintained bathroom
7	Many of the parksites are bare, are not level and have water retention issues
7	The bathrooms and showers could use updating
7	Would like to see more full hook up options.
7	has one nice bathroom facility and one very old that needs updated
7	Campsites are designed for tents and campers back in the 1960's- 1970's not today's vehicles. Campground is too loud, music blasting all over and some loud campfires, not patrolled or not enforced.
7	Would rate 10 but not enough full hookups sites

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

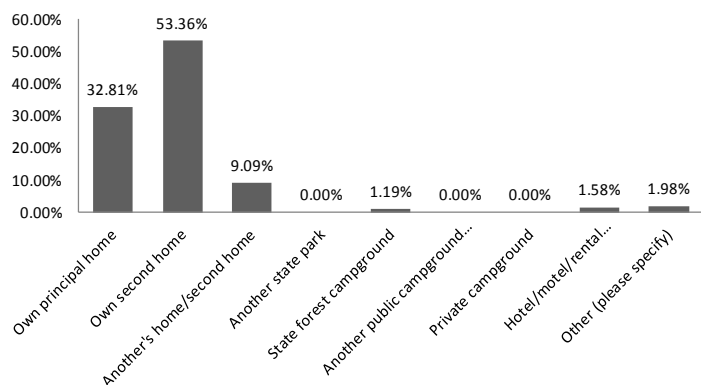
7	The showers need work. New shower heads, better water temperature control some seem like they only have hot or cold water not both
7	Not enough full hook up sites and long weekends including a holiday are cramped
7	On the water but crowded
7	Sites are next to the lake but are small
7	Restrooms are nice, camping sites are very uneven and unforgiving during any heavy rain
7	Bathroom cleanliness
7	Sites too close together.
7	Depends on the trip and where your site is but some times it is very loud.
7	It seems to be pretty up-to-date. We've camped at older campgrounds.
7	Th sites are very close together with not much between them.
7	The FULL hookup sites are very limited in number. Need more
7	Low sites hold water when it rains
7	Could be better bathrooms. There are a lot of loud party type camper that sometimes ruin it for those of us with kids.
7	Camp ground could be better maintained
7	How busy the place is
7	need more full hook-ups for camping
7	Shady sites are very dirty.
7	Uneven ground in many spots makes them unsuitable for RVs
7	bathhouse is usually clean and park is relatively quiet
7	Campsites had lots of debris from previous campers on sites
7	(no response)
6	Some bathrooms/showers are very old. Please post a schedule of cleaning times. Park store is poorly stocked & no grocery store nearby. Rain water runoff is very poorly controlled.
6	The most eastern bathroom/shower building is atrocious.
6	The bathrooms are not as clean as they used to be and the nighttime patrols and supervision in the park seems sometimes nonexistent. This has led to some unpleasant experiences on several of our recent visits.
6	Beach had swimmers itch
6	Bathroom was not in the best shape, could use a remodel. Showers had cracking tiles.
6	The sites are very cramped and right on top of each other.
6	Cleaner could be better
6	shower houses could have been cleaner fire pits could be bigger
6	(no response)

6	Sites are never ready for memorial weekend
6	Dirt sites, price increases
6	Shower are could be better
6	(no response)
6	Insufficient Full Hookups for RV's (Sewer)
6	Showers are decent with nothing to complain about. There are many so it's usually not a long wait. One facility is better than the other. So newer bathroom accessories I'm both would be nice.
6	Would like water on campsite to be more available.
6	crowded on weekends
6	A bit run down. Kind of a party atmosphere with loud groups. Swimmers itch.
6	Beautiful park, no consistency in rule enforcement
6	(no response)
6	Restrooms need updating
6	The sites are too close together, no barriers between neighbors
6	Showers in last building of the park have never worked properly since they replaced the boiler. In year's past, the management was almost too strict but now it is too lenient. I can remember getting a warning on my windshield because I was 3 FEET onto an open area next to my campsite; last year there were as many as 5 and 6 cars on a site across from me with several on the playground. It was so difficult to get past a vehicle actually hit a tree trying to go up the road.
6	I love the waterfront spaces. Many of the spaces are too sandy
6	Outdated bathrooms, showers. Could use a large wash sink for tenting campers to wash dishes.
5	crowded, noisy,
5	OLD and dirty restrooms & shower facilities
5	(no response)
5	Comparable with other state parks
5	Noncompliant campers. Prime beach area used for dogs.
5	The park has become overdeveloped, too many trees have been removed within the last few years. The facility is turning into a large parking lot.
5	Bathrooms and showers have progressively gotten worse.
5	Usually when we come it's the first big weekend of the year and the park is a mess! Lots are full of leaves and fire pits are full! Every year we have to have someone come clean out the fire pit and the last 2 years the leaves were so bad we couldn't get to our site without having to literally walk through leaves that were up to our calf's. Not acceptable! If it was up to me we wouldn't go but we go with a group of people.
5	Dirty bathrooms

5	It is very crowded and the partying gets out of control on the weekends in the summer and fall.
5	(no response)
5	Barking dogs and close lots.
5	Bathrooms are not clean. Showers need new shower heads, at the very least.
5	The sites have become pretty bad. The last 5 visits the sites were dirty and the grass was down. The sites are also crowded and not kept up as they used to be
5	The campground is crowded and noisy.
5	bathrooms can be dirty
5	Would like to see more full hookup sites, more pull thru sites and more grassy sites.
5	It was crowded and I felt on top of everyone else staying there.
5	(no response)
4	the facilities are not quality
4	Way too noisy could use more rangers.
4	The bathroom facilities in the section I typically camp have not been updated. The facilities border on disgusting and the summer staff (not park rangers) don't do a good job at cleaning them.
4	Overnight camping during the summer is crowded & noisy
3	I don't need to use them very much
3	(no response)
3	Barking dogs, loud music way past quiet hour. Picnic table and fire pit were junk. Swimmers itch present makes lake much less enjoyable than in past.
2	The bathrooms were a mess
2	Same as above
2	Location and clean water.
1	The east bathroom is in horrible condition. The summer help is demonstrably not interested in maintaining it. We can often see them shirk their duties, leaving it to someone else much older who is not attached to their cell phone.
1	(no response)
1	Loud, too many people, Sites way too small
1	Loud partying till late in the night. Campers next door were playing music with explicit lyrics. NOT Family oriented. I called the ranger station on more than one occasion during our stay with little effect. Lots of drunk people and people driving too fast in the campground.

Q13: ON YOUR RECENT VISIT, WHERE DID YOU STAY WHEN YOU VISITED THE PARK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
OWN PRINCIPAL HOME	32.81%	83
OWN SECOND HOME	53.36%	135
ANOTHER'S HOME/SECOND HOME	9.09%	23
ANOTHER STATE PARK	0.00%	0
STATE FOREST CAMPGROUND	1.19%	3
ANOTHER PUBLIC CAMPGROUND (FEDERAL, COUNTY, TOWNSHIP, ETC)	0.00%	0
PRIVATE CAMPGROUND	0.00%	0
HOTEL/MOTEL/RENTAL PROPERTY/B&B	1.58%	4
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	1.98%	5
ANSWERED		253
SKIPPED		704

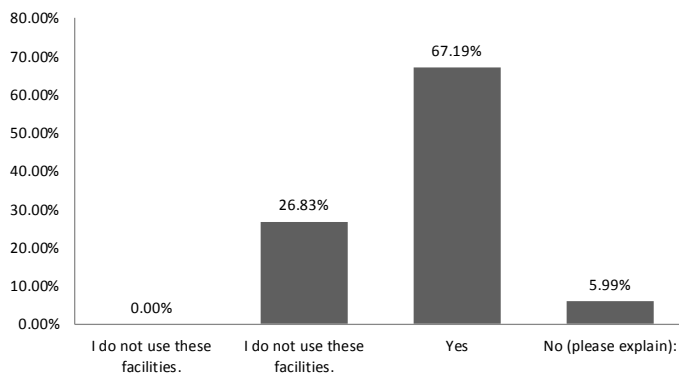


Other (please specify):

1. lakefront house
2. Family cottage
3. Cottage
4. Parent's second home on Higgins Lake
5. Camped at the park

Q14: DO THE DAY-USE FACILITIES (PICNIC PAVILION, GRILLS, BEACH, PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT, PARKING, ETC.) AT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK MEET YOUR NEEDS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
I DO NOT USE THESE FACILITIES.	0.00%	0
I DO NOT USE THESE FACILITIES.	26.83%	224
YES	67.19%	561
NO (PLEASE EXPLAIN):	5.99%	50
ANSWERED		835
SKIPPED		122



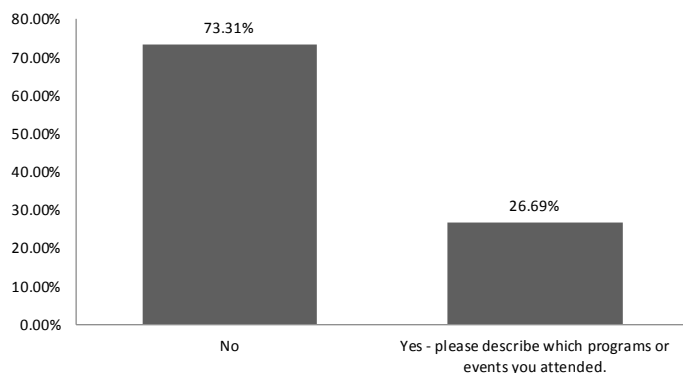
No (please explain):

- Am very interested in having boat wash facilities at all 3 boat launch sites at Higgins Lake
- It would be nice to have more playground equipment in the day use
- When parking it would be nice if people with campers would not park in the front lots taking up several parking spaces
- Very much so.....Beach & Playground
- I'm
- No Hotwater Boat wash
- Boat
- Not enough trash containers so people don't always clean up properly for the next group
- The beaches could be cleaner
- there should be a boat wash that can accommodate all boats. concessions needs to be expanded.
- Need a family playground
- I am on a boat
- More updated playgrounds for little kids!
- Beach is always filled with seagull/duck poop. We always have to go into the water off to the side of the beach which I hate doing. It would look better and attract more guests if the beach area was kept clean and looked more inviting. Everything else is nice though.
- Playground equipment meets needs but needs some updating. The beach is great.
- Except goose feces
- Not well kept. Need better cleaning and upkeep
- Swimmers itch has kept us from summer camping the last few years
- Mostly, but summer help and even the rangers appear unwilling to enforce the no-dogs-on-the-beach rule.
- Could be cleaner at times in the summer
- More kids equipment
- They could do a much better job of cleaning the park rest-room. Yes, it gets a lot of use during a busy weekend, but in the recent years the park has had a lot of young workers just riding around in carts. They need to be better used in cleaning.
- Foul music coming from the boaters in front of day use
- Not enough designated areas for such a large park
- Yes- i only wish pet owners cleaned up after their pets at the pet beaches
- We camp
- Geese poop on the beaches
- Need more " beach " Ares
- Tables n benches need repair
- I think the beach garbages are gone.
- The grills could use some cleaning other than that I enjoy my visit
- Need updated playground equipment. Beach was closed last two visits because of swimmers itch.
- The playground equipment needs updating
- Some of the grills are very old and it is hard to get a picnic table unless u get there early pavilion always seems busy
- Beach Area needs to be improved upon
- Volleyball courts are shallow with concrete underneath. Scraped my knees countless times there. Also the net is droopy and broken.
- Should be bigger and more of all
- Never had the opportunity
- They are good. A larger playground would be nice.
- Playground equipment is limited. Bathrooms are in need of remodel and they are always dirty.
- Not needed
- Happy to see the dog park. We've waited 40 years go this. People who camp with dogs could never enjoy the water with dogs. About time. Not adequate amount of picnics tables they are few and in great need of repair
- Could use a few more picnic tables and grills
- Playgrounds both day use and camping could use some updating. Good example is Silver Lakes new playground

45. We pass through them with a bicycle or on a walk, but don't specifically use them otherwise
46. Not enough parking
47. We usually camp at the park so we don't have to use the day-use facilities
48. The dog park was not raked last year, and when I inquired about it I had to rake it myself. The beaches need to be cleared and raked every morning as there are branches and weeds etc all over making it heavy with bugs and hard to enjoy the beach.
49. We are usually camping at South Higgins when we use any facilities
50. Some trees, especially lower branches would make it better for launching catamarans.

Q15 & 16: HAVE YOU PARTICIPATED IN A PROGRAM OR SPECIAL EVENT AT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK IN THE PAST? (FOR EXAMPLE, HALLOWEEN FEST, EXPLORER GUIDE PROGRAMS, BASKETBALL CLINICS) AND WHAT WAS YOUR OPINION OF THE EVENT YOU ATTENDED?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSES COUNTED
NO	73.31%	607
YES - PLEASE DESCRIBE WHICH PROGRAMS OR EVENTS YOU ATTENDED.	26.69%	221
ANSWERED		828
SKIPPED		129



Basketball clinic	Awesome
Bike tour	Very nice
Birding program	OK
Birds	Grandkids loved it
boat parade, fireworks, kids camp activities	fun
Boaters safety class	Good
car show	good
Car show, fall fest	Great
Car show. Halloween	Fun
Car shows	Nice event
Children's activities, Bat watching, frog exploration	was happy with the event
children's program	great
CRAM Sailing event	Awesome!
Don't remember	Favorable
Except for Ranger programs for kids	Well done
Explorer	Good
Explorer	Well organized and interesting
Explorer Guide	was educational
Explorer Guide	Well done...great for kids
Explorer guide in how to fish with casting experience, types of birds, types of trees and plants on nature walk	Excellent
explorer guide program	well run by park volunteer
Explorer guide programs	My kids loved it
Explorer guide programs when kids were younger	Informative, hands on
Explorer Guide Programs, Fishing Clinics, Marl Lake nature trips	Wonderful
Explorer Programs	Great, my son loved it
Fall	Nice- need seed spitting contest!!
Fall festival	Good
Fall festival	Very nice
Fishing	Good
Fishing	Good
Fishing	Very good
Fishing for kids	Was not handled well more showed up
Fishing lessons on Marl Lake years ago.	Kids loved it.
Fishing program	A little short but was ok
Fourth of July parade through campground	It was nice; nothing special
Friday Fishing with grandkids at Marl Lake	Nice opportunity

PROGRAM OR EVENT	OPINION OF EVENT
4th of July party	Super fun
5K Run	Very well organized
always took grandchildre to Park Ranger Programs	GREAT!
Astronomy-shooting stars	Very informative. Fun. Loved the smores??
Basketball	Excellent

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Friday night fishing with grandkids at Morrow Lake and movie night Under the Stars	Great opportunities
Grandkids used basketball activity	Helped to occupy young teen boys
Guide programs	Excellent
Guided hikes at Marl, activities with the Camp Host, softball, etc.	Very good.
Halloween fest, car show	Well planned, well attended
Halloweekends- we'll be returning this year for that!	Really great program. Last year was first time- exceeded my expectations
Halloween	Awesome
Halloween	Awesome
Halloween	Awesome
Halloween	Excellent
Halloween	Excellent.
Halloween	Family fun
halloween	fine
Halloween	Fun
Halloween	Fun
Halloween	Good fun!
Halloween	Good. Sometimes lack of presence of staff to inform of what's going on
Halloween	Great fun for all ages
halloween	great time
Halloween	Great! We go every year and the whole family enjoys it. Wish there was more to do though to keep everyone entertained longer
Halloween	Hallow harvest
Halloween	It poured and was cold so we didn't take advantage of much. What we did see was great
Halloween	It was great.
Halloween	It was very nice. Costume contest took too long, kids were getting impatient.
Halloween	It was wonderful.
Halloween	It's nice when weather cooperates
halloween	lots of fun
Halloween	Love it!
Halloween	Nice
Halloween	So so. Could have had more effort for a bigger draw
Halloween	Very nice
Halloween	Very nice

Halloween	Very nice- minus the rain
Halloween	Was wonderful non
Halloween	Well run
Halloween	Wonderful
Halloween	Wonderful
Halloween	Wonderful
halloween , and it went great, it does every year, your part DNR people are great,	awesome and will do it again
Halloween and some winter event	Could have been state sponsored to be exaggerating and fall events
Halloween event	Excellent
Halloween fest	A blast
Halloween fest	Awesome
Halloween fest	Awesome
Halloween fest	Awesome
Halloween Fest	Awesome
Halloween Fest	Big fun
Halloween Fest	Enjoyed
Halloween Fest	Excellent
Halloween fest	Excellent
Halloween Fest	Fantastic
Halloween Fest	Fantastic...the staff does an excellent job.
Halloween Fest	Fun
Halloween fest	Fun
Halloween Fest	fun
Halloween fest	Fun
Halloween fest	fun, and grandkids loved it too.
Halloween Fest	Good
Halloween Fest	Good- mini golf was great
halloween fest	good job
Halloween Fest	Great
Halloween Fest	Great
Halloween fest	Great
Halloween Fest	Great
Halloween Fest	Great
Halloween Fest	Great
Halloween fest	Great
Halloween fest	great for the kids
Halloween Fest	Greatest in the area
Halloween Fest	It has been a blast the last 3 years I have attended.
Halloween Fest	It was awesome
Halloween Fest	Kids loved it.
Halloween fest	Little small and boring. Wish there was more activities.
Halloween Fest	Lots of fun and participation

Halloween Fest	Love it and come back every year for it
Halloween fest	Loved it
Halloween Fest	Loved it! The park employees do a fantastic job!
Halloween Fest	Outstanding
Halloween fest	two weekends is too much go back to one.
Halloween Fest	Very enjoyable
Halloween Fest	Very Happy with the program
Halloween fest	Very neat
Halloween Fest	Very well organized, helpful personal interested in hosting a family friendly.
Halloween fest	We go every year
Halloween Fest	Wonderful
Halloween Fest	Wonderful, loved it
Halloween Fest	
Halloween Fest	
Halloween fest	
Halloween Fest	
Halloween fest . We go every year with the grand kids	fun with good participation from other campers
Halloween fest and Fun Run 5k	Very well put together and is looked forward to each year.
Halloween fest is cool	Awesome
Halloween Fest with musical guest and the haunted campgrounds	It was a lot of fun
Halloween fest, annual car show	Great
Halloween Fest, Law Enforcement Torch Run, Higgins Lake Sunrise Run	Well done
Halloween Fest, love it	Very cool
Halloween Fest, Sunrise Run	The Halloween Weekend is the best!
Halloween fest, sunrise run,	Well organized
halloween fest. explorer guide programs	most have been good
Halloween Fest. Sunrise run.	Cost of games that kids wanted to participate in.
Halloween fest/ harvest fest	It was a lot of fun
Halloween festival	Awesome
Halloween Festival	It's awesome!
Halloween Festival	Nice
Halloween fun fest	Well organized
Halloween in car show	Thought it was fantastic

Halloween is our favorite. We've been attending for the past 5 years	It is well organized with lots of events for the kids. The outdoor haunted woods is always a hit. We love seeing how so many others decorate their campsite. Many of our friends that also live in the Higgins Lake/ Roscommon area also camp during the Halloween weekend.
Halloween, 5k runs	Exciting
Halloween, car show	Excellent
Halloween.	Fun
Hallowen	We love it
Hallowween Fest!!!	The activity tent seems to be going down hill!
Harvest Fest	Excellent
harvest fest	fun
Harvest Fest	Good
Harvest fest	Great family fun
Harvest Fest	Had a great time
Harvest fest	Satisfactory
Harvest fest	Staff & volunteers do an excellent event
Harvest fest	Very fun
Harvest Fest, Sunrise Run, Torch Run, Car Show	Good
Harvest festival	Top notch by far the best
Harvest Frdt	Awesome
Harvestfest	Love it
Higgins Lake Sunrise Run	Loved it
Higgins lake sunrise run	Wonderful
hikes	they were fine
halloween fest	last couple time was not happy with it
Halloween fest	very good
Halloween fest	Was very fun, loved it
I believe I've attended one of my class reunions at the South State Park	It's a nice big area for such an event.
I have been going to Jalloween fest since the 1st one	Great! However, there were more activities in the previous years
Kids activities and Halloween weekend	Great!
Kids activities, learning about fishing, movie night etc	Well organized, not very well advertised.
Kids- Junior Ranger	Enjoyed it
Local festivals	Parties
Meteor program	Nice!
My children camp at the park so we do come over for the some of the events	Good children's programs

My kids have gone to the basketball clinic.	They didn't get much attention so did not like it.
Naturalist, fishing	Well done
nature programs	great
Old car show	It was good!
Open house at pavilion	It was fun
Our children and our grandchildren have done the crafts over the years that the host and hostess run. They have also done the fishing and bow and arrow clinics. They have participated in nature walks and book reading programs.	They were enjoyed by us and the children.
Ranger program	Great
rock painting for kids	It was nice.
Rotary fun run, Halloween, 4th July party	Well done...the 4th party is going to become a problem.
Run from park to park	Good
Run in June	Well run
Smokey the bear birthday	It was very nice they did a good job
Son has participated in basketball clinics and other SHLSP activities	Great!
Summer 5k	It was fun but needed better signs
Sunrise 5k	Wonderful
Sunrise half marathon	Missed the total distance by over quarter mile
Sunrise race	Awesome
Sunrise run	Excellent
Sunrise Run	Excellent
sunrise run	excellent
Sunrise run	Good
Sunrise Run	Great
Sunrise run	Great
Sunrise Run	Look forward to the event each year
Sunrise Run	Small, but great!
Sunrise Run	We'll run.
Sunrise Run	
Sunrise Run half marathon	Great
Sunrise Run, Halloween fest	Fun
Sunrise run, Halloween fest	Great
Sunrise Run, Halloween Fest	Well run and fun
Sunshine run	Great

The activities with the camp host. The ranger who does programs with the children and the library reading of books crafts with the children..	They were great!!!!
The Halloween fest	Okay
The host children activities	Very nice
The sunrise walk run that starts and stops at the park.	Well participated.
Volunteered	Loved it
We organize the 4th of July Bike Ride	
We've tried to attend Halloween festivities, but they seemed more directed to kids or families with kids.	Disappointed.
When my kids where younger	Cannot remember
winterfest	ok
No response	Great time for kids and families
No response	I have not attended these event but I think they are great and hear good things much needed for the area
No response	The Explorer Guide Programs need an overhaul.
No response	Would have been better with hot water boat wash and fewer invasive species

Q17: WHAT ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS OR EVENTS WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE FUTURE, IF ANY?

ANSWERED	161
SKIPPED	795

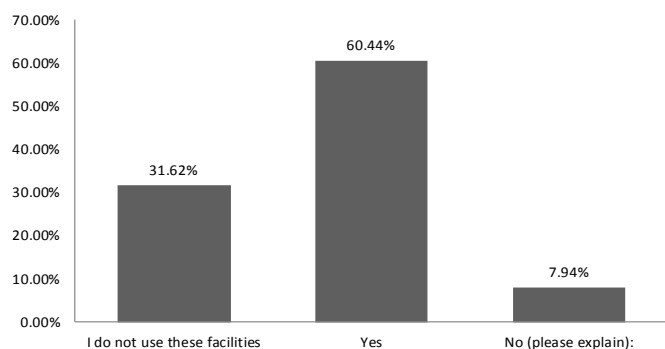
1. Craft Show
2. Get camp host to tell the kids about the different trees in this park.
3. Kid friendly
4. paddle boat rental
5. Save trees and stop beach erosion
6. Kites, fishing, volleyball
7. fishing clinics, paddle boarding clinic
8. 10k
9. Programs that prevent invasive species from destroying the beautiful lake
10. None
11. More festivals
12. Bike trail between north and south completed
13. Yoga by the lake; guided nature walks; movies in the

- park; boating safety classes; boating excursions on the lake
14. NA
15. Kids nature programs
16. Pedal bike event
17. Swim lessons offered
18. Craft Fair
19. Women's weekends
20. Lake parties
21. more bicycle activities or tours, more programs to improve the park or help keep the lake clean
22. Maybe something at night on the beach or lake
23. Winter Gathering/demos to show kids ice fishing, snowshoeing, etc.
24. Program or informational purpose in regards to keeping Higgins lake clean.
25. Host having activities, bike decorating 4th of July, crafts,
26. Conservation/invasive species prevention education
27. Winter festival
28. not applicable
29. A hot water boat wash to prevent the encroachment of invasive species into Higgins Lake
30. Winter skating
31. lighted water entrance bouys
32. Drivers ed for some boat users. Many from park do not know boating rules
33. ?
34. More kids events
35. none
36. Boat wash to keep invasive species out
37. Boaters Safety
38. Dk
39. Current programs to prevent invasive species from entering the lake via boats/trailers/etc.
40. Ecology, keeping lake clean, keeping invasive species out
41. Making crafts out of birch
42. fireworks, walking events, paddle board events
43. Star gazing or meteor shower
44. Hot water staffed boat wash
45. Ice skating
46. none
47. Boating class
48. anything
49. Nature hike
50. Painting rocks in spring or fall for school kids
51. Hiking, trail running events
52. Cross country ski trails
53. more nature
54. snowshoe hikes, astronomy nights
55. Car shows
56. None come to mind
57. A fishing event
58. More events during the summer
59. health & wellness, holistic health program, yoga on beach, kids nature treasure hunt, photography club
60. Not sure
61. Better publicity locally
62. Evening music at the pavilion
63. constellation, aurora borealis
64. respect for nature and education about aquatic invasive species
65. Volunteer cleanup walks
66. Bike trail
67. wild life viewing, hunting, fishing and shooting seminars
68. More conservation and environmental awareness related events.
69. Cross country skiing
70. Nothing comes to mind at the moment.
71. N/a
72. More boater safety, 5k maybe a craft show
73. Get to know your neighbor, donut breakfast, smores night
74. decorated boat parade ? maybe near the 4th of July weekend
75. Have no idea
76. Boat and RV Show
77. Things for young children
78. More winter programs.
79. Family oriented.
80. fishing derbies
81. Face painting, water games, obstacle course, etc
82. N/a
83. Camps
84. A disk golf course
85. Swim lessons
86. Not sure
87. Family friendly
88. Trapping
89. Spring fall and winter we went to the winter fest at north
90. Motorcycle event
91. More car shows

92. I would like to see more events in July for families
93. More full hookup rv sites
94. Hay rides
95. ?
96. Love what you have
97. None
98. na
99. Walk with a ranger, interpretive talks, guided canoe/kayak program, astronomy program,
100. Programs that help property owners understand the ecological impacts of property management, as relates to the watershed, and particularly lawn treatments along the lake shore.
101. Musical
102. Children's sandcastles, either classes or competition. I don't see the same level of craftsmanship that we had at the park 20 years ago
103. Movies or group activities for campers
104. More pet-centered events
105. movie nite. with big screen and popcorn
106. More trails. More activities for kids
107. Larger tents for kids activities with hosts
108. Christmas lights
109. More bike tours around the lake
110. things for my kids are great
111. An ATV access or ORV way around the area
112. Maybe crafting
113. More activities in winter at South state
114. Maybe pumpkin bowling for harvest fest
115. pig roast???
116. Anything that kids and adults can enjoy
117. N/A
118. Leave it be as is
119. NA
120. Activities at the camp store area on rainy days for the kids. Maybe have the ranger there instead of canceling the activity by the camp host area.
121. more kids program like burts p
122. More programs for kids
123. More planned recreational activities for kids, teens and adults.
124. Star-gazing
125. Nature and environment learning activities for kids
126. More kids events
127. Sport coordination
128. Game nights, starry nights (star gazing) group hikes with education
129. Ranger walks, info. Of flowers and animals in the area.
130. Education on lake care- AIS prevention
131. Movie nights, summer programs for kids
132. birding event
133. More involved 4th of July activities
134. Evening outdoor movies
135. music events in the evening
136. Adult programs, perhaps: Cards, short scrapbooking/ card making class
137. N/A
138. N/a
139. ??
140. More activities for the kids through the Hosts. We used to have bike parades, for 4th of July, Crafts...
141. Not sure
142. Be made aware of all the activities/programs at the park
143. boater safety classes
144. Easter egg hunt
145. n/a
146. N/A
147. Educational programs directed for adults concerning items directly linked to Higgins.
148. N/A
149. More of the same
150. None
151. na
152. Adult Events ie beach party
153. maybe some type of swimming, biking & running event like a "sprint Tri"
154. Snow shoe or cross country
155. pet friendly events
156. Nature and fishing programs are nice
157. More interpretative programs for families.
158. Recycling while away from home
159. Clinics for best methods to fish at Higgins. Guided snorkeling offshore.
160. An acoustic music weekend with organized and impromptu acoustic jams and music
161. Varied Dates for programs. The timing of the fishing programs seems strange during the summer.

Q18: DO THE TRAILS AT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK MEET YOUR NEEDS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
I DO NOT USE THESE FACILITIES	31.62%	259
YES	60.44%	495
NO (PLEASE EXPLAIN):	7.94%	65
ANSWERED		819
SKIPPED		138



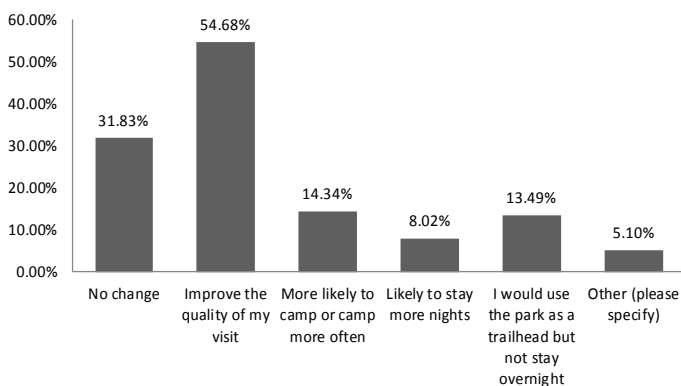
No (please explain):

1. Have to drive to Marl Lake to access them.
2. Would like more on the water
3. It would be nice if there were a longer trail that went around a good part of the lake to hike on.
4. I love my trail walks!
5. Marl lake trails need some work on the existing boardwalk, as well as new boardwalk to get through flooded parts of trail
6. They need to be expanded. Same ol' same ol'
7. Marl Lake trails
8. They could be paved or smoother
9. ya
10. Need more paved trails
11. Senior citizens need area trails to be wider and smoother (eliminate protruding tree roots, level the surfaces, etc.). Many of us cannot use the trails because of the footing is so unsure. Those of us who still can use them will sooner or later be unable to.
12. Could be better. Wish there was a trail system around the lake.
13. What trails? The paved walking path? If there are nice dirt wooded trails I don't know about them.
14. More
15. Would like more paved trails
16. Would like bike trail around whole lake.
17. Bridges n walkways need repair
18. i would like to see more hiking trails and possibly cross country ski trails
19. The ones around Marl lake
20. The trails need to be free of obstacles and cleaned of debris.
21. Mark lake trail
22. I don't think the trails go anywhere. They are poorly maintained.
23. Wish they were longer...would be nice to have one that goes all the way around the lake
24. Need more
25. Could be expanded.
26. I would like to use them especially if a continuous trail around the lake.
27. Besides the trails next to beach (which are well maintained) the trails on the other side of the park through the woods could be better maintained and utilized.
28. Could be more. State area, Mark Lake, across street could have better trails
29. Not aware of any trails
30. didn't know there were trails at south higgins lake state park
31. Need more nature/hiking trails
32. liked the way the store used to be about 5-6 years ago... more old school and clean not like a cheap gas station look
33. They could be better
34. Bike trail needs to be finished
35. getting over grown with grooming needed
36. The biking trails inside the park used to be much better worn/used for kids. They are nearly gone, now.
37. Could be wider & trimmed out better
38. I have never seen the trails
39. More signage at Marl lake
40. Yes, but please continue the new trail. Much needed to go from the South to the North Higgins Park.
41. They are in need of major help. Have been let go too long.
42. Trails are minimal, tend to like longer hiking trails.
43. J
44. More trails needed
45. Love them
46. Bridges n walkways need repair
47. Would love to see more trails
48. I don't really recall any "trails" there other than that at Marl lake- and those need some SERIOUS upkeep.
49. while most are fine I think there could be more to get to the businesses on the road.
50. limited trails
51. I would love to see more trailer

52. Did not find any
53. Paved bike path would be used extensively
54. Not sure where they are or go to.
55. Need more
56. Not near campground
57. Would be nice to have more trails
58. I don't know is a better answer because I haven't taken the time to try them out yet.
59. sometimes they are not mowed to allow side by side walking
60. Yes
61. Yes, but it would be nice if they were longer.
62. I'm not really aware of any trails.
63. More hiking opportunities would be nice- really looking forward to the new bike trail.
64. Would like to see more bike trails
65. Would be nice to have some more specific trails for mountain biking.

Q19: THE COMMUNITY IS CURRENTLY WORKING ON A BICYCLE TRAIL AROUND HIGGINS LAKE. HOW MIGHT THIS AFFECT YOUR VISIT TO SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
NO CHANGE	31.83%	262
IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF MY VISIT	54.68%	450
MORE LIKELY TO CAMP OR CAMP MORE OFTEN	14.34%	118
LIKELY TO STAY MORE NIGHTS	8.02%	66
I WOULD USE THE PARK AS A TRAILHEAD BUT NOT STAY OVERNIGHT	13.49%	111
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	5.10%	42
ANSWERED		823
SKIPPED		134



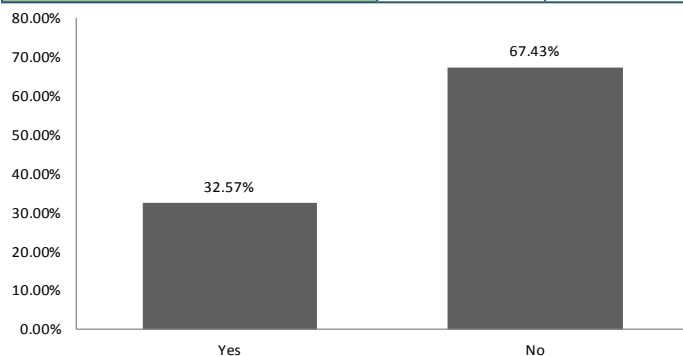
Other (please specify):

1. Has to be separate from the road.
2. Might use the trail but not park facilities
3. Improve visits by locals by bike
4. As a home owner on the lake I would love to see one. I would use it regularly
5. Great addition to campers and citizens
6. Would ride the bike trails daily or nearly daily
7. We own a house on the lake about a mile from the park. We would ride our bikes to the park and east Higgins lake road is too busy to ride with smaller kids
8. VERY LIKELY, we have a cottage nearby & would LOVE a bike trail!!!
9. As a car driver, glad to get bikes off road.
10. I'd use the hotwater boat wash before heading out on the trail
11. excellent idea, great healthy exercise
12. Ride my bike to the park more
13. Besides deer- I now have to worry about bicycles
14. would definitely use the park more and recommend to friends
15. won't use it myself but a great addition to the park
16. I ride a road bike and would love a paved trail to avoid traffic
17. Excited for its completion!
18. I would love it, I ride my bike around the lake often and it would make the ride safer
19. Very excited about this!
20. looking forward to another way to enjoy the beautiful lake and surrounding areas. We love to bike on paved and safe trails. Thank you!
21. Did find all the tree cutting along 104 disturbing.
22. I would not camp overnight because we have our own home at Higgins Lake.
23. I fear it will allow easier access by undeseriables to our belongings
24. This is an excellent idea. I bicycle with friends around the lake on the road. Trail around the lake would be much safer and would attract other sports minded visitors to the area. Would also like to see trails from Higgins to Houghton Lake.
25. Please stop cutting down the trees!!!
26. We will use it, feels a little unsafe close to traffic
27. As long as the trails do not impede access to the lake for recreational use.
28. Great idea! Hope it's done soon!
29. We have a cabin on Detroit point. Would love a bike trail!!
30. I would use the trails.
31. more noise and unsecure

32. I would not like to see that trail go through the beach area. That would be to much traffic
33. Am local and do use trial would welcome addition
34. Looking forward to the tail
35. Will use the trails with kids
36. Depends on the safety of the trail (separate from roadway; wide enough for a bike trailer). Will it be suitable for families with small children?
37. LOVE THE IDEA!!
38. Biking around the lake is my favorite workout
39. That is a really great addition!
40. It might me interesting to be able to ride a bicycle outside of the park. Currently there is only a bicycle trail on the shoulder of the county road for a short distance towards Roscommon.
41. I might use this as additional places to walk our dogs
42. It would offer an additional activity to do while we visit. A trail to the nearby park would be great too.

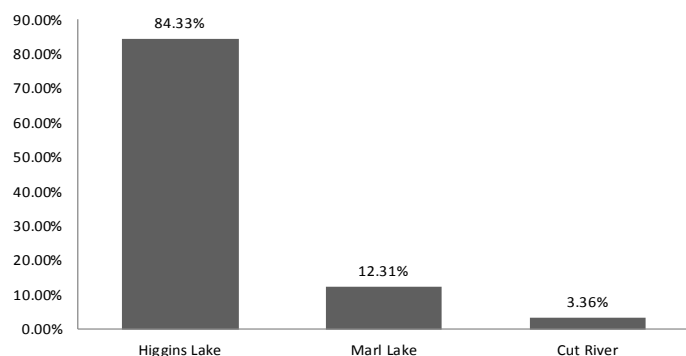
Q20: DO YOU UTILIZE THE STATE PARK FOR FISHING ACCESS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
YES	32.57%	270
NO	67.43%	559
ANSWERED		829
SKIPPED		128



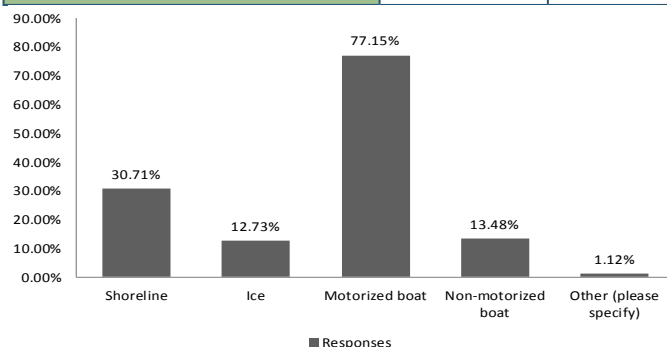
Q21: WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED FISHING LOCATION AT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
HIGGINS LAKE	84.33%	226
MARL LAKE	12.31%	33
CUT RIVER	3.36%	9
ANSWERED		268
SKIPPED		689



Q22: HOW DO YOU TYPICALLY ACCESS THE WATER FOR FISHING? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
SHORELINE	30.71%	82
ICE	12.73%	34
MOTORIZED BOAT	77.15%	206
NON-MOTORIZED BOAT	13.48%	36
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	1.12%	3
ANSWERED		267
SKIPPED		690

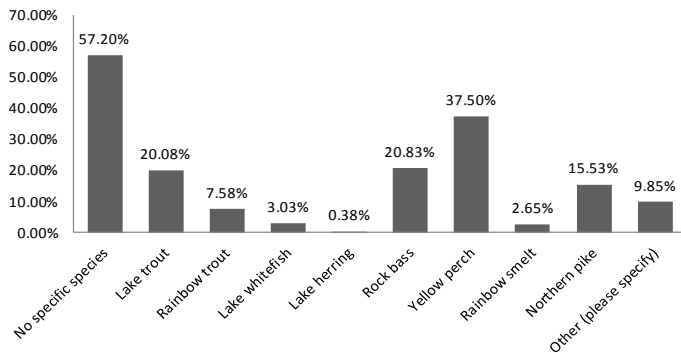


Other (please specify):

1. Using a motorized boat staffed boat washes I highly appreciate being able to use a boat wash before entering and leaving the lake.
2. Canoe
3. Dock

Q23: WHAT DO YOU FISH FOR AT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
NO SPECIFIC SPECIES	57.20%	151
LAKE TROUT	20.08%	53
RAINBOW TROUT	7.58%	20
LAKE WHITEFISH	3.03%	8
LAKE HERRING	0.38%	1
ROCK BASS	20.83%	55
YELLOW PERCH	37.50%	99
RAINBOW SMELT	2.65%	7
NORTHERN PIKE	15.53%	41
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	9.85%	26
ANSWERED		264
SKIPPED		693



Other (please specify):

- All species
- bass
- anything that bites
- We catch and release
- There are no fish on the south end of the lake- been there 40 yrs- all I got was a rock bass...
- Small mouth bass
- Pan fish
- Smelt
- Smallmouth bass
- Na
- Smallmouth bass
- bass
- Bass
- Small Mouth Bass
- shark
- Smallmouth bass
- Small mouth bass
- Pan fish

- Smelt
- Whatever bites... Motor Boat and Kayaks
- Smallmouth Bass
- Bass and walleye
- Large Mouth Bass
- Catch and release
- Small-mouth Bass
- Smallmouth Bass

Q24: PLEASE PROVIDE ANY COMMENTS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING YOUR FISHING EXPERIENCE AT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK.

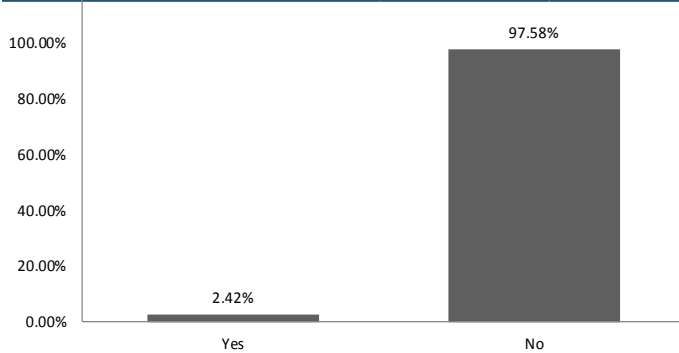
ANSWERED	73
SKIPPED	884

- slow...little results
- Not many fish.
- Fishing is the greatest stress reliever, always a great time
- Fun for kids!
- Beautiful lake to be on.
- Fishing is great but I do a lot of snorkeling. I have notice in past 10 years the weed beds off Detroit and Chicago point are shrinking fast
- Would like to see the boat wash have hot water to aid in invasive species control
- restful
- I dont eat fish so i just catch and release. Just want to have a good time.
- Perch were rather small this past winter
- Good fishing in Marl Lake
- Love to fish the lake
- Too many rock bass
- The fishing is always great if the fisherman's timing is right.
- Love fishing in Higgins Lake!!!
- Have not had much luck in the fishing department. We just have fun.
- You don't stock down there, so there is no fishing- need to stock smelt so they something to eat- duh
- FUN
- I like the variety of species and seasonal aspects of the lake
- Perch seem to be getting smaller and less populated.
- Just for fun
- Best before memorial day and after Labor day
- Sparse, it's probably the fisherman.

24. They need to plant Browns again
25. A day of fishing in Higgins Lk is a great day.
26. Fishing is not Higgins' strong point but I am more interested in spending time with my daughters doing it so it is fine. However, during busy boating times it is hard to fish unless it is early in the morning due to a lack of respect to give a wide berth from the majority of the boaters. More marine law enforcement of general boating safety would be helpful.
27. Make perch bigger
28. I'm surprised and disappointed that a park this size doesn't have a fish cleaning house with some running water and a convenient way to dispose of the waste. This would be a great addition for families and individuals who like to fish.
29. Fun fishing near weed beds around Detroit Point
30. big lake trout
31. Finding lots of abandoned tackle and open hooks on shoreline. Not very safe with people walking barefoot.
32. Na
33. A great trout fishery but could really benefit from bringing brown trout back
34. Very large lake and it is hard getting to know the lake and best places to fish
35. Love being out on the lake, but not a good fisher-person. Just my lack of knowledge I've never caught any keepers.
36. My favorite lake to fish!
37. Stop the kiddos in the channel, and stop the kids swimming in the boat basin.
38. Fishing can be difficult at times due to lake activity.
39. Fish cleaning stations
40. Good fishing!
41. I wish the perch were larger.
42. Other than 4th of July it is still one of the most wonderful places on Earth. The party boats on the 4th ruin your perfect corner of the world. It's not just the number of boats, and the unseemly behavior, but the pollution it creates.
43. Loved it so much there we bought a cabin there
44. Great fishing
45. Access the lake via boat launch to keep boat at Gerrish Marina. Then use lake from May-September and take boat out at the boat launch. Fish Marl regularly from ice out to ice on.
46. Good
47. Friday night fishing as an Explorer Program is it a good opportunity to fish with grandkids.
48. Not good, but we had fun
49. The boat launch can be a real hectic place come summer. A lot of disorder
50. Good
51. Not much luck, due to weather conditions.
52. Hard to catch anything at south Higgins
53. Hey fishing dock would be great
54. Very fun but hard to beach fish at marl lake
55. Enjoyable. Caught quite a few perch. Just fishing for fun w/children.
56. many people need lessons on how to properly launch and retrieve their boat in a safe and timely manner lessons in courtesy might help too
57. I have had moderate success
58. We look for bass, pan fish but mainly perch. Perch are generally too small to keep
59. Please try to keep it a small campground atmosphere
60. I would like to see access left open toward the weather end of the park, near the shower building.
61. fishing is poor from shore
62. Good fishing but the evening can be frustrating due to pleasure boaters!
63. We're not usually very lucky!
64. we need to restock brown trout!! not rainbows
65. I'd like to catch more fish
66. We've only fished the lake one time but were unsure of a good spot to fish.
67. Success has dwindled over past 30 years
68. Marl lake typically has better fishing.
69. Jet skis stir up many shore fishing areas. They need to respect fishers in an area.
70. Always fun, but the jet-skis and power boats travel too fast, and should be regulated more in front of SHLSP.
71. Like to snorkel
72. We haven't caught much! But that could be our fault.
73. The Rock Bass are abundant and delicious. We would like to see larger perch.

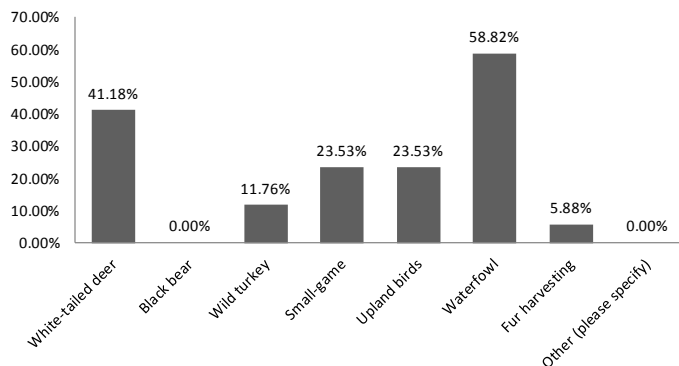
Q25: DO YOU HUNT/TRAP AT MARL LAKE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
YES	2.42%	20
NO	97.58%	806
ANSWERED		826
SKIPPED		131



Q26: WHAT DO YOU HUNT/TRAP? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSES COUNTED
WHITE-TAILED DEER	41.18%	7
BLACK BEAR	0.00%	0
WILD TURKEY	11.76%	2
SMALL-GAME	23.53%	4
UPLAND BIRDS	23.53%	4
WATERFOWL	58.82%	10
FUR HARVESTING	5.88%	1
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	0.00%	0
ANSWERED		17
SKIPPED		940



Q27: PLEASE PROVIDE ANY COMMENTS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING YOUR HUNTING/ TRAPPING EXPERIENCE AT MARL LAKE.

ANSWERED	8
SKIPPED	949

Comments:

1. very mucky
2. Never got a deer but have seen plenty just not what I wanted. Luck of the draw but I love to be in the woods.
3. I've grouse hunted the Marl Lake area for years and find the trails most helpful and the game challenging.
4. Enjoy every year opening season
5. Not too successful
6. Na
7. Need more access around the entire Park
8. opening day is usually ruined by too many idiots and inconsiderate hunters. I have intentionally skipped it for years now

Q:28 & 29: PLEASE SHARE HOW SATISFIED YOU WERE WITH YOUR MOST RECENT VISIT TO SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE WITH 10 BEING THE HIGHEST SATISFACTION AND PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY YOU GAVE THIS RATING.

RATING	RESPONSE	RESPONSE COUNT
10	35.20%	283
9	25.25%	203
8	21.77%	175
7	8.33%	67
6	3.36%	27
5	3.36%	27
4	0.37%	3
3	1.00%	8
2	0.62%	5
1	0.75%	6
WEIGHTED AVERAGE		8.55
ANSWERED		804
SKIPPED		152

RATING	PRIMARY REASON
10	1st time there beautiful Sun sets clean water fun on the pontoon
10	Access is excellent. Lagoon makes using boat launch easy and multiple bays make it convenient. Marl Lake area is wonderful for hiking and fishing.
10	Again, beautiful lake and good campground. Annual trip
10	Always a good time

10	Always a great campground
10	Always very nice!
10	As previously stated
10	awesome campsite close to the lake
10	Beautiful
10	Beautiful and improved area.
10	Beautiful and now that swimmer's itch is under control, it has it all.
10	Beautiful lake and beautiful campground. Just a wonderful experience camping.
10	Beautiful Lake, clean, relaxing & peaceful. We bought our vacation house near Higgins Lake as our only targetted area of interest.
10	Beautiful nature.
10	Beautiful pristine lake
10	Beautiful setting friendly staff
10	Beautiful surroundings, park personnel
10	Because the park was great, it's clean it's Woodsy and the Lake is very refreshing, we've used it now over 30 years... I would like to see larger lots, we've purchased a 44 foot 5th wheel and although Tom says you have lots available, I'd like to see more...and more 50 amp service lots..
10	Been coming here since I was a child, I am now 24. I will always come here
10	Been going camping there for 39 years making great memories.
10	best park best lake.
10	Blue water
10	Boat launch is one of the best in the state.
10	boat launch/park store
10	Clean
10	Clean family friendly park to share with our children
10	Clean fun and QUIET
10	Clean, friendly, beautiful setting
10	clean, great boat launch, lots of facilities
10	Clean, when its a busy weekend, there is always DNR or police watching to make sure everyone is safe.
10	cleanest most beautiful state park in the state of Michigan
10	Cleanliness
10	Come to harvest fest each year but due to transportation was unable to make it for last couple years

10	Courtesy of employees working at the park
10	Ease if access to our cottage
10	Ease of Access
10	Ease of boat launch, parking, flow of traffic, camping accommodations
10	easy access to ice fishing
10	Easy access, clean
10	Easy in and out for boat launch
10	Enjoy the area.
10	Enjoy the boat and beach area.
10	Enjoyed a great Labor Day Weekend camping experience.
10	Everyone is helpful, kind and the Park is always well taken care of
10	Everything in order, clean, no surprises
10	Everything is always pristine
10	everything positive
10	everything was very good
10	Excellent stay other than weather which is not controllable.
10	Fall camping and Halloween fest.
10	Feels like home
10	Full hookups and beautiful view of lake
10	Full hookups, availability, well maintained sites.
10	Fun factor HIGH
10	Fun friends
10	Good experience
10	Good time
10	Good weather good friends & family & good facilities...
10	Gorgeous clean pure lake.
10	Great boat launch
10	great facility, all employees are friendly and helpful
10	great lagoon for boat access
10	Great park and great facilities
10	Great place recent improvements look nice!
10	Great place to visit
10	Great place to visit and camp.
10	Great place to visit. Lake is so beautiful.
10	Great place to visit. Lots of things to do. Best lake in the state!
10	Great staff and beautiful location.
10	Great staff very clean place
10	Great staff, the park and restrooms are very clean
10	Had a great time
10	Had a wonderful time
10	Had a wonderful time. Loved the newer boat parking, and the lake was beautiful
10	Had a wonderful time. No issues with noise and clean facilities.

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

10	Had a wonderful week camping and boating. Area was clean and well kept. Lake is always clean and beautiful.
10	Halloween fest
10	Halloween was great
10	hard to improve on
10	have been camping at SHL for 45 years
10	Higgins Lake is an outstanding lake and the park is well maintained.
10	Higgins Lake is my favorite spot in Michigan
10	I always have a great time with friends and family.
10	I enjoy my visit every time here. No complaints
10	I enjoy the beautiful lake and the campground is awesome.
10	I enjoyed my stay
10	I have never had a bad time there even in the rain The staff is amazing but the overweight older d n r officer is rude to people and feels like an ashtray
10	I just love South Higgins State Park..
10	I just love the campground. I like the sites being so close to the lake. The lake is beautiful. The state parks where we live don't have that so it's worth the 3 hour drive. Hate that it's so competitive to get the lakefront sites during the summer but not much you can do about that I'm guessing.
10	I love everything about this park!
10	I love Higgins Lake and have been coming there since 1950. I lived by the lake for 17 years. Now I live in Florida.
10	I love our parks, RAM center and West launch..... you do an awesome job, and are a crucial part of our community.
10	I love the halloween camping weekeend
10	I love the South State Park. I love the depth and beauty of the water.
10	I love the water ways and the park personnel
10	I really like being there.
10	I've been coming to Higgins Lake my entire life and now at 60 years of age still my favorite lake. Clear water and beautiful sand bottom. Park always clean.
10	I've camp at south park all my life. doesn't get better than this park
10	I've never been disappointed with my visits at South State.
10	ice cream at the camp store
10	Ice Fishing and nobody was there
10	It gives me access to the most beautiful lake in the state
10	It is a fun place to go
10	It is a nice family spot to visit and the cleanliness of the park. The activities you can do while there for the day visiting.

10	It is a treasure that our family has enjoyed for 7 generations. We meet there at the same time every year, coming from all across the country. Although the swim area is smaller, the sand is less, and the life guard stands are gone, very little else has changed. We love the fact that the park is such a solid, constant, family Foundation in our lives.
10	It is close and I trust DNR facilities.
10	It is the best campground in Michigan.
10	It is well managed and maintained.
10	It provides me with everything I want
10	It was a beautiful Fall weekend with a great campsite that had a great lake view!
10	It was a great experience
10	It was clean quiet and great people around me.
10	It was for Halloween Fest and it deserves a 10!
10	It's a beautiful place
10	It's a great park and lake
10	It's a wonderful park
10	It's always fun
10	it's always so beautiful
10	It's amazing
10	It's in a great area
10	It's my favorite park, it's large, people are friendly, clean facilities. Alot to do. Water is beautiful.
10	It's well-maintained, and I understand that others see it for the jewel it is.
10	It's a peaceful place for me and my dog to enjoy nature by walking through the park. Great kayaking lake.
10	It's awesome large space
10	It's my favorite park
10	It's one of the best state parks in Michigan with a lot to do and it's in a great location.
10	It's the best!
10	Its anice place
10	Just a great place for kids and friends and family. Really enjoy our 10 day stay over July 4th every year. We've never considered anywhere else during this timeframe. Size of lots are great for our RV.
10	Just an overall enjoyable experience. You can beat the turquoise blue water and the towering pine trees. Lots of shallow, clear water for swimming.
10	just like coming there.
10	JUst plain fun, beautiful lake
10	Lake is free of swimmers itch now
10	Last summer when we used boat launch to put boat in and out, there was no wait/a reasonable wait. It's a nice area--lots of space--for backing up trailer.
10	Love camping there
10	Love camping there

10	love it
10	Love park. Close to home
10	Love the area
10	Love The Lake and the campground
10	Love the park
10	Love the park
10	Love the park and the swim area with sandy bottom is the best around the area.
10	Love the pet-friendliness. More state parks should consider this.
10	Love the south state park!
10	Love the store and they have free wi fi
10	Love this park and the workers.
10	Loved the park for 71 years. I remember camping at the park when a private lake front cottage existed
10	Me and my family love this park and lake.
10	Meets all my needs
10	Never had any complaint
10	Nice boat launch
10	Nice place to camp and enjoy Michigan's early fall
10	Nice place to walk the dogs
10	No complaints
10	No issues
10	No lines to wait in while launching boat
10	No reason... just love that park. The swimmers itch sucks though, which has caused me to use the park less than usual the last few years.
10	Our family had a wonderful time. Our site was comfortable and clean.
10	Our whole family uses this park.....and extended family members only camp at this park.
10	Park is well maintained and very clean with lots of things to do.
10	Park was quiet with very few campers
10	PeacefulNess of the park in the fall.
10	Provides a wide array of areas and activities
10	Really like the park been coming there every summer for 35 years
10	Rented 2 pontoon boats and staff was great.
10	Reserved a FULL HOOK-UP SITE, and we absolutely love those sites!
10	Roads throughout the park were cleared of snow.
10	Satisfied beyond expectations.
10	satisfies my needs
10	smooth from reservations, to check in, to finish
10	South Higgins is my favorite
10	South Higgins park is our favorite place to camp. We usually stay a full week because we enjoy it so much. Big clean park, beautiful beach, trails to run on it's perfect!
10	Store and beach were excellent

10	Swimming/Boating (I have a lower concern of getting swimmers itch due to recent efforts to eradicate)
10	The 4th of July party at the south park was so fun
10	The beach is beautiful with trees and shallow water for young kids. It is one of the cleanest parks I've visited.
10	The boat launch was readily available and the docks most helpful when launching my watercraft
10	The boat launch, the clean bathrooms, park store
10	The day was beautiful, nature was glorious, and the park was peaceful.
10	The friendly staff!
10	The lake is beautiful!
10	The park is clean and kept up well.
10	The park is well maintained
10	The staff is wonderful and the park is clean, the Halloween event is the best around. Amazing place to visit. Beautiful scenery.
10	The water is absolutely beautiful and the beach is nice! Love the FULL HOOK-UP SITES! You need to put more in this park. We use to stay at S. Higgins several times a year, but we love to use our trailers amenities, so we've been going to Private Park because ALL of their sites are FULL HOOK-UP SITES.
10	This is a great camp ground
10	This is where the best boat launch on the lake is.
10	Very beautiful and well maintained
10	Very clean
10	Very consistent accomadations over the years... Great family park
10	Very happy
10	Very nice park.
10	Very organized at the boat launch
10	Visited friends who own a home on the lake. We could not get over the clarity of the water.
10	Walking paths in Marl Lake are beautiful and peaceful. We gjo on off tourists times like Sunday afternoon and usually have it to ourselves.
10	Was late in season, quiet, beautiful place.
10	We accessed the boat launch to go fishing and all went well!
10	We always enjoy the park when visiting.
10	We always love the south state park. It's a great place to anchor and play with the kids in the sandy, shallow water.

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

10	We are never disappointed with our stays at HLSSP. The blue exception would be the several years we had to deal with Swimmers Itch.
10	We come every year for our family reunion. My brother has a house up there and the rest of us stay at the campground. We live it there!!
10	We had a beautiful lot that we normally try to get with a view of the lake and full hook-up
10	We had a great time on Halloween weekend. Even in the years that it rained, it's just a fun weekend.
10	We have been camping here for close to 50 years. Friendly and clean place to camp.
10	We just love the beach and boating in this area.
10	We just love the park/lake! Even though we have a cottage & don't camp there anymore (for the last 15 years we camped South Higgins State Park) we have friends that camp there every year & we visit!!
10	we like it
10	We love the gorgeous pristine water We have a boat and use it here all summer and fall
10	We love this park
10	We rented a pontoon boat for the day and went tubing. We made wonderful memories with our family.
10	We visited during an "off time" which made it much more enjoyable.
10	We've always had a favorable experience with the camp staff.
10	We've been going there for 30 years and it is just as enjoyable as the first time.
10	We're always pleased with the campsites, amenities and staff.
10	We've been camping at SHLSP for 50 years. We just love the park and beach and the friendly Rangers and employees we can call family.
10	Weather was beautiful. Late October.
10	Weather was wonderful & camping experience was great
10	Well run
10	wonderful boat launch
10	Wonderful water, camping, biking, kayaking with family and friends
10	Yearly family reunion trip
10	You can never go wrong with a day out on the boat at South State!
9	Again, the showers need maintenance. Could use a better Mountain Bike trail.
9	Always a fun vacation

9	Always a great trip!
9	always clean. I enjoy the shaded camp sites and clean facilities.
9	Always positive, sorry to see so many trees getting taken down. Have not seen any trees planted to replace those lost. Need new plantings for our grandkids.
9	Always room for improvement...maybe with check-in...check in online, avoid the line. Love improvement to pump station
9	Bad swimmers itch
9	Beautiful, great snack bar/ food truck!
9	Been going there since 1961. Favorite state park!
9	Believe it or not we have a Cottage 10 houses down on the lake. We enjoy camping, so utilize camping 3-4 times a year & use the boat ramp twice annually.
9	Boat lagoon in first loop
9	Boat launch and beach.
9	Clean, convenient, easy ramp
9	Clean, normally quiet, full hookup sites, easy lake access, nearby boat parking, constant improvements.
9	Clear water
9	Comparable to other state parks in Michigan
9	cruise marina, look at boats and visit friends at park.
9	Easy access from our home to launch our boat
9	Enjoy the beach and water
9	Enjoyed last years visits
9	Every thing was great. Just didn't get the lot I wanted
9	Everything was great though campground facilities could be improved.
9	good boat launch
9	Good campground with great access to the beach
9	Good clean friendly park
9	Great area for picnicking
9	great boat launch facilities
9	Great campground and the best water condition in Michigan
9	Great family camping trip as usual.
9	Great for camping. Very busy
9	Great friendly employees, facilities and of course beautiful Higgins Lake Access
9	Great fun with family while camping. Bathrooms are nice.
9	Great park, could have more full hook ups
9	Great place to camp. Only drawback was swimmer itch fears
9	Great.
9	Have been meeting friends up here each summer for over 30 years. Nice place to meet and camp.

9	Have to control the swimmers itch issues on the lake, so people are comfortable being in the water! Please continue the programs to eliminate the merganser ducks the SICON programs are working
9	I have always enjoyed the park.
9	I have no complaints. Bathrooms are always clean and the noise level at night is appropriate.
9	I like that way camp sites are laid out and the restroom have been improved except in the first loop.
9	I like the full hookup sites.
9	I love this park, always room for improvement.
9	I think everything is fantastic just could use a little bit more support at the boat launch
9	I think Marl lake needs some love in terms of trail upkeep, but otherwise I think the facilities are outstanding
9	I've spent my entire life at Higgins Lake but just in recent years has the swimmers itch gotten really bad. Last year was fine, but continue to keep up efforts to prevent it!
9	is what it is
9	It is a beautiful park.
9	It is always the same
9	It is neat and clean. I was there for a graduation party.
9	It is ok
9	It is well kept, fun, beautiful.
9	It seemed overcrowded last summer, and littered, at least were we had our picnic last year. We usually go to the North Park.
9	It would be a Ten if I didn't see more and more zebra mussels every year.
9	It's a family tradition and couldn't imagine not being there.
9	It's wonderful. Need to work on picking up the goose...droppings. Only reason for not getting a 10. 2017 was really bad for the beach and basin area.
9	It's a great park for big families.
9	Just enjoy the park and it's activities.
9	Just love this park
9	lots of late arrivals on Friday night (noise).
9	love everything about the park
9	Love south. Just busy
9	Love the park
9	Meets are needs
9	Modern facilities,
9	Most friendly rangers in this park

9	My annual trip with friends was excellent, everyone was happy, stay was great
9	My nephew uses the boat launch to put his boat in and out of the water on a seasonal basis ...I really do not know how satisfied or dissatisfied he has been with his visitI assume since he has not mentioned any problems his visit is positive.
9	Need to get rid of swimmers itch
9	nice camping, nice fall festival
9	nice facilities
9	nice site, beautiful view of the lake- only downside is people are not courteous and walked through our campsite
9	Nothing is a perfect 10 rating. So be happy with a 9 rating.
9	Only 30A hook ups
9	Our camping experiences have generally always been good.
9	Outdoors experience. Many things to do.
9	Overall experience
9	Overall pleased. Would be nice if Rangers would patrol/walk around more in evening.
9	Quality of the water, and not a highly developed area (retail, shopping, etc)
9	quiet fall weekend, low census, pretty fall colors
9	Quite crowded
9	Safe and clean
9	same bathroom needs upkeep
9	see previous comment.
9	Shady, beautiful lake, camp store convenience, activities via camp host when the grandkids are with us.
9	some noise by other campers
9	Still a lot of dirt and not enough grassy areas. Otherwise it is a 10
9	Super fun, didn't win a million bucks
9	Sure uneven rain causes flooding

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

9	Swimmers itch has been a problem in the past. It has kept us from visiting in the summer. The last few years have been better. Family and friends very susceptible.
9	Swimmers Itch prevented a 10. As always enjoyed myself
9	The bathrooms were a little less clean than I remembered.
9	the facilities were well kept, the park was quiet, and violators of rules were dealt with quickly.
9	The guest next to us got drunk and was hauled away in an ambulance and then kicked out, traumatized my kids
9	The lake is the main draw for us
9	The park has a lot of natural beauty the people are friendly
9	The park is extremely nice and hopefully it stays this way with the use of a mandatory hot water boat wash.
9	The park is great but not perfect
9	The park is right on the water with easy access to the water, really enjoy the dog beach it is one of the best we have seen at a state park
9	The site was nice. The park was close enough to town that it wasn't a far drive, but still far enough away to enjoy the quiet.
9	The state park is beautiful
9	The week was cooler and rainy. Our site had a river running thru it when it rained hard
9	There is always room for improvement
9	There is always room for improvement. But most of all I'm very satisfied.
9	Trails in places are a little rooted hard to run but it's nature
9	used the bathrooms for shelter during a huge storm
9	very enjoyable, quiet and restful
9	very nice place to stay. Full hook-up sites near to the beach and trails.
9	water sandy bottom
9	We always have a great time at South Higgins
9	We always have a large group come camping with us and it's always a very enjoyable experience.
9	We always have fun camping at south Higgins
9	We came late fall so it wasn't crowded. Kayaking was wonderful and bathrooms in good shape
9	We don't always enjoy all the partying that happens out on the lake.
9	We had a great experience
9	we had a nice time and our lot was good in size.
9	We had good wind conditions almost the entire week, perfect for sailing
9	We have fun & relax with friends- love hanging at the beach & campfire at our sites.

9	WE love camping there
9	We love coming
9	We love everything about camping at Higgins Lake! The new boat launch is fantastic and we love the option to auger our boat out in front of the park or to pull up into the lagoon.
9	We love the park.
9	weather could have been better
9	What is not to love about Higgins State Park. However, as stated the duck poop is abundant on the Lagoon clean up
9	Wish I could stay longer.
9	would have scored a 10, but The boat launch and backup traffic clogs everything up, restricts access to Marl, and the excess boaters clog up the beach.
9	Would like a dog friendly beach area expanded.
9	would like better choices in camp store
8	again, bathhouses are clean and park is quiet
8	Again, very crowded campground, filled with people listening to loud music and drinking heavily. Very little DNR presence.
8	All the bathrooms need to be updated, and there are a lot of campsites that sit very low and get flooded when it rains.
8	Always a great camping experience.
8	As mentioned before, plastic, metal and paper trash left in fire ring by prior campers made it impossible to cook over the fire as I had planned to do.
8	As stated earlier, water temp. in showers is a problem. Swimmer's itch has also been a problem sometimes.
8	Bath house doesn't always have hot water. Most times the handicap shower handle isn't working.
8	Bathroom cleaning. Should leave open as sometime you are unable to make it to another area to use the restroom.
8	Bathrooms need to be cleaned/checked during heavy traffic periods. A outdoor shower pad at the beach would be extremely helpful in helping to eliminate swimmers itch also. There's never enough picnic tables during peak months.
8	bathrooms need updating
8	Bathrooms we're not cleaned and supplied properly.
8	Beach could be bigger
8	Beautiful lake and clean beach
8	Beautiful park
8	Beautiful....however the disregard for Higgins Lake is saddening. Boats, if used properly are wo wonderful, the parties need to be cleaned up. Have marine patrol on smaller craft to weave around the massive tieoffs, soon they will disappear, boats n party people.

8	boat launch area is not large enough to accommodate visitors/campers.
8	Campground is nice, showers are cold and suck.
8	Clean and adequate
8	close to home, visiting friends
8	Could be cleaner, a lot of drunks
8	Crowded. Weekend warriors doing crazy things on the lake.
8	Crowded/easy to put boat in & out
8	difficult to access your boat or vehicles without getting bird feces in your boat/vehicle. Goose population is out of control
8	Dog issues. I rescued a dog from drowning and saw several over the time struggle in the water because people don't pay attention some where drunk and didn't care. We also had to listen to some bark constantly when a family left them. One barked late into the night because the people were out late to a bar. Witnessed and heard a few dogs be abused by owners not wanting to deal with them. It really was awful to witness this all weekend. I love dogs and am a dog owner, when and if I bring my dog, they are a priority not someone else's.
8	east side campground bathroom buildings require updates
8	Enjoy all amenities at park
8	Enjoy this place
8	Enjoyed our time there, campsite was hard to get our 30 ft trailer in even though it was rated for that size. With the trees and drop off at the pavement it made it very hard to get in and had to go the wrong way on the road to make it work.
8	frightened to get in the water as a result of swimmers itch scare
8	Fun for kids.
8	Fun Halloween
8	Fun park, but nothing done when a camper attempted to run my daughter over which threw her off her bike and bent it. Another camper saw it talked to dnr and were told even though they ask for license plates it didn't mean anything.
8	Generally a beautiful park and great access to the lake. (Please do not let weekend party boaters ruin it!)
8	Good boat launch
8	good experience
8	Good operation and things are kept clean.
8	Good visit
8	good visit but getting access to quality local firewood is getting harder . most places only provide small bundles of slab wood that will barely make a fire .
8	Great staff
8	Harvest Fest is always a good time.

8	I love HL South Park. However, I have been disappointed with the underage drinking at the park especially during holidays
8	I love the park but there isn't a good play activity area for little kids.
8	I love this park for anchoring a boat, hanging out in the sun, and planning in the water.
8	I wish they would make more full hook up sites I'm on the website first thing to make reservations and can never get full hook up
8	I'm there all the time
8	It is too crowded. Otherwise everything is great.
8	It was in October and uncrowded
8	it would be a 10 except for the crowding on some camping sites
8	Kids like playground
8	Like the park
8	Loud campers during quiet time
8	Love everything but cost is getting too high.
8	Love the lake for boating
8	lovely beach and day use area, but still some scare over swimmer's itch.
8	More lakeside beach area would be nice by lagoon. The Rocks are ridiculous
8	Most convenient boat ramp, and best place near our house to anchor and be social.
8	Mostly all good
8	Na
8	Need more bathroom facilities
8	Needs better protection from invasive species.
8	Nobody gets a 10
8	noise, unsecure
8	noisy at night
8	October day visit. Minimal crowd issues.
8	Only go doing the week. Weekends are too crowded with boat traffic.
8	Over all satisfied
8	Overall great place to visit. Rowdiness has been improved over the 4th of July, but could be better. Large groups tend to get loud over the holiday week. Family friendly environment should be encouraged.
8	Park ranger was rude and very mean I have never had this problem in 40 yrs
8	People are slob, they don't take care of the park like it were their own.
8	phone service was not available nor was wifi
8	Picnic area could be cleaner if more trash receptacles were available. Had charcoal stolen
8	Pretty clean facilities, great campsites.

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

8	Restrooms near boat launch should be open year round
8	Restrooms near sites 11,13,15 where I camp need upgrading.
8	restrooms need to be bigger
8	restrooms were somewhat dirty
8	Roads have finally been repaired. No bath house in third section
8	Serves my needs well
8	South State is a beautiful park. It does seem to be more attractive to people partying including younger people and this can get out of hand.
8	Swimmers it h
8	Swimmers itch
8	Swimmers itch a big problem keeping us out of the lake
8	Swimmers itch has had a huge impact on satisfaction over the last 5+ years (of my 40 consecutive years visiting this park)
8	Swimmers itch still a problem
8	The beach is very dirty with goose droppings that should be cleaned up during beach season, I've seen toddlers playing in it! Lots of bacteria!!
8	The boat wash at the launch site sold me.
8	The launch is nice, kinda busy however.
8	The park grounds have little to no grass muddy
8	The park is clean and well kept up.
8	The park is very pretty and a good place to swim.
8	there are a lot of loud, rowdy people that go to this park. I would like more noise control and less trash
8	Too many dogs in swim area and on beach
8	Unsuccessful hunting
8	Used boat launch and delighted to see a boat wash
8	used site 24; it was convenient to toilets and boat basin; however, when it rained, was very muddy

8	Used the park to get our boats out of the lake. Was not usually a very busy time but was very disorganized, because boats were either just sitting taking forever waiting for their trailer or unloading everything on the dock while others were waiting for a spot to put their trailer in and get their boat out. No one was around to kind of monitor and control the caos. Many people cutting in front of other cars, or just sitting there. Also way too many pedestrians loitering around and walking in front of cars trying to get their trailer in and out of the ramp.
8	Very busy
8	Very nice, but I wish for two things to improve on. One to improve pedestrian activity around the boat launch while people are actively putting in or taking boats out. Random people and children walking around, through cars and in front of cars in an already very busy place, could lead to someone getting hurt by accident. 2nd I would like to see MANDITORY boat washing by all boats entering into higgins lake, even if that would cost me some money for a tag stating my boat was washed and okay to enter to the water. My family has a had a place on the water for almost 50 years, and the invasive species such as the moilfoil and the zebra mussels has really done a detriment to the lake and i would hope we could stop more from entering the lake. I never like seeing dirty boats from Lake st Claire being put into Higgins then seeing the boat owner pull out a sponge and wash his dirty boat using the lake water and possibly bringing an invasive species into the lake when they could use the boat wash. Also, I think they boat wash should cost money and hot water should be used to wash these boats. If a person can afford to own a boat, they could pay the extra \$20-\$30 to get a boat wash slip or sticker as they do in lake Havasu in Arizona.
8	We need more orderly loading and unloading during busy times. I almost saw a fight because an outsider didn't know the rules.
8	We paid for full hookup and had no water. No security.
8	We stayed in area 1 and the restroom/showers desperately need to be renovated. End of the season the campsites are in poor condition from over use. The lack of grass can result in a "dirty" experience, particularly whan it rains
8	Weather
8	Weather. Lots were very uneven and sandy.
8	Well organized
8	Wish there were more kayaks available my husband and I went down the cut river to Marl lake but wanted to go farther but had to get the 2 kayaks back
8	would be nice

8	Would give it a 10 if there were more full hook up spots. When you are there for 2 weeks, you really need them. We were unable to reserve them last year, even 6 months in advance.	7	I still absolutely love the park, lake and beach. I am very disappointed in the cleanliness of the bathroom facilities, park in general and boat launch. The bathrooms were ABSOLUTELY dangerous at times because the maintenance staff could or would not clean the soap off the floor, which made using the facilities like walking on an ice rink. In general I have found the park to not be as clean with respect to garbage and dead animal pickup, and the bathrooms are also much dirtier than in the past.
8	Would have been perfect but for the shallow volleyball course. 4th of July activities were great. Personally was talked to by the park patrol officers (while drunk at my campsite) to quiet down. They were very respectful and understanding. I also know they kicked out another group for being unreasonably drunk and wandering the campgrounds. I appreciate that discretion.	7	I worked at the state park store as a teenager in 95 and 96. It seems less family oriented now.
8	Would have received a 10, but we were using the old bathroom at the East park and it had a tendency to flood occasionally.	7	It's a beautiful lake , but the campground could be maintained better. The rv dump station was large but one station was out of order while we visited . Could be maintained better
8	Would like to see the brush And fallen trees cleaned up, Especially around the new walking trail which we use frequently. Remove the zebra	7	loop's bathroom/showers oldest in park and very poorly maintained
8	Zebra mussels and lagoon weeds bring it down	7	Loud music and loud campfires are not why we go camping. Problem with most of the state parks we stay at. Campgrounds are not patrolled or noise restrictions enforced.
7	Beach should be raked and cleaned better Lake should be cleaned of leaves and debris.	7	Love the park except the original bathroom in the East section- it's just awful.
7	Beautiful lake- family friendly area	7	More direction at the boat launch during busy weekends
7	Boat launch is good .	7	Not enough full hookups in the campground
7	Boat ramps fill up quick along with parking and then access to the lake is very limited	7	Not enough patrol of boaters parking & drinking!
7	Could be better due to quality of the sites.	7	Not perfect, but pretty good
7	Don't personally use all available facilities at the park	7	Overall nice accomadations
7	Enjoyable but as stated previous, Biggersights are on the small side and can sometimes be annoying when you have noisy neighbors. Again, frequently see people driving way too fast thru campground. Accidents will rise. Bigger sites will allow people to park away from road and not create hazard of small children running out from behind into road.	7	Park store was run down and dirty
7	Gross showers	7	Seemed messy
7	Having cops patrol the boat launch is unnecessary. The DNR should be able to handle this job or there is a huge problem within the DNR. Even though I support the lake patrol, i do not support them being there at the boat launch.	7	Site REALLY sandy.
7	Higher if not for loud music	7	Site wasn't level and hard to back into
7	I had a great site but I stayed for 8 days and the grass was very long when I arrived, they cut some of it while I was there but a lot of it was VERY long by the time I left.	7	Sites too close
7	I like the park but at times it is crowded.	7	Small sites, nothing in the immediate area to do unless you drive in to Houghton Lake
7	I like the park, but the camping spaces are too sandy.	7	Some swimmers itch still exists
7	I love the lake, but sometimes the camping sites are filled with loud, party guests. I wish either the sites were more secluded or a better job was done to monitor obnoxious guests.	7	swimmer's itch problem needs to be solved!
7	I mainly use the boat ramp. Just try not to during busy times. The ramp is good.	7	Swimmers itch
		7	Swimmers itch has improved and can relax about kids swimming
		7	The beaches are not kept up. Too many rocks, stones and dirt (not sand) at the lagoon beach area (needs new, clean beach sand). The beach in front of the park store and the lagoon beach are always peppered with cigarette butts.
		7	The park is near my second home at the lake so my wife and I use it regularly. We would use it more if the walking and biking trails were better or more connected to each other.
		7	the park needs to be a leader in removing mersengers from the lake that cause the swimmers itch
		7	The showers

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

7	They could use better variety
7	trailer got covered with some kind of beetle during the day, spent sometime killing as many as possible
7	Typically is quiet at the park. Our last visit was loud and rude campers
7	Very busy at the boat ramp- saw one time you had a DNR person directing traffic- that was a good idea.
7	visited late summer, not on weekend
7	We enjoyed the trails around Marl Lake
7	We only camp here in the fall when it is less busy
7	Wish the trails would be finished
7	Would give it a 10 if it weren't for Swimmers Itch which I must admit has improved the last two summers.
7	Would like to see all boats using the convenient boat wash
6	Again, the one bathroom nearest to my campsite is gross
6	As I said earlier ,nighttime supervision and bathroom cleaning Also,the signs regarding dogs on the public beach areas are generally ignored and not enforced.
6	Bathrooms are awful.
6	Dirt sites, cost, difficulty of reserving full hookup sites
6	Had a great time at the Halloween Fest but showers and restrooms were not kept up with, especially with the extra foot traffic.
6	I love the area and the beaches provided. I am concerned about the number and size of boats that are launched there. I also am concerned about the invasive species that arrive with these boats.
6	I think the south state is a great spot for people to come together and spend the day, but over the last few years they have really stretched out the swim area making it hard for boaters to park. The store has also gone downhill over the years. As a kid I loved the candy counter, but it would be nice to see that grow again. The sheriff/dnr patrol has also seemed to be a little excessive over the years and not focusing on the true safety of boaters but rather how they can catch someone
6	Insufficient full Hookups for RV's (sewer)
6	it was halloween fest was not happy at all with it
6	It's a wonder boat launch and lagoon, but usually very crowded.
6	Must get the boating traffic controlled Need to get all boats washed w hot water stop bringing in snails etc
6	Need more law enforcement presence at boat launch. Also in campground. Speed needs to be enforced in park as it poses a threat to my children.

6	No consistency in rules enforcement
6	Not enough electrical power when sharing a campsite with another tent. Circuit kept tripping
6	Our visit was cut short because of rain.
6	Park is never ready memorial weekend
6	Park store was low on a lot of things
6	See previous comments.
6	Seemed not well kept. My fiancé impaled his foot on a sharp piece of metal in the grass by boat launch. Lots of broken glass in parking lots. Cans in woods. Fishing hooks and line on shore. People suck.. but should be cleaned up better.
6	Summer / July 2017 1- The markings and numbers for the campsite needs to be updated 2- The picnic table and the fire pits need repaired 3- in different places- the asphalt roadway within the campground needs to be repaired
6	Swimmers itch at the beach. Also could use a new playscape
6	The boats have taken over the swim area and are in too close.
6	The lake is beautiful & warm, but it's disappointing there's not much sandy shoreline- especially in front of the eastern swim area. The grass and steep drops to the water are hard on everyone's bare feet. There's also a HUGE problem with dogs on the beach, sometimes they're even unleashed. Complaints to park rangers are made, but they don't respond. Many people also don't clean up after their dogs- both in community-use areas & on campsites. It's become a big problem the past few years. The bathrooms are also not maintained very well.
6	There was lots of debris from previous campers on my site. Also, many campers did not know camper etiquette and walked through our site.
6	Usually when we come it's the first big weekend of the year and the park is a mess! Lots are full of leaves and fire pits are full! Every year we have to have someone come clean out the fire pit and this last 2 years the leaves were so bad we couldn't get to our site without having to literally walk through leaves that were up to my calf's. Not acceptable! If it was up to me we wouldn't go but we go with a group of people.
6	We were there in mid to late August and there weren't many people camping. All of the bathroom facilities were partially closed limiting access and that was inconvenient at times.
5	Always scared of getting swimmers itch
5	barking dogs
5	Bathrooms are undermaintained and rangers don't enforce the park rules.
5	Camping was like packed sardines
5	Can't swim anymore due to swimmers itch.
5	Comparable with other state parks

5	East bathroom near 39/40 needs serious repair or replacement. Multiple violations of posted rules near beach.
5	i would like to see boat washes mandatory with hot water washes
5	It has turned into a party atmosphere. I like to relax more. Go to the North more.
5	just average ,nothing special
5	just came for a bicycling event so was not really into the Park as a park
5	Playground equipment needs updating. The amount of alcohol and drunks on the beach and in the water make it difficult to enjoy with young children
5	ramps sometimes crowded
5	Shallow waters were filled with anchored motorboats making it very difficult to access and not safe to swim in even chest deep waters. The swim area buoys do not go far enough out into depth of water.
5	Social media is making this park a party spot. Too many people anchor their boats to drink, play music and socialize all day long. The "cigarette boats" that zoom back and forth on the lake are noisy and annoying.
5	Swimmer's itch was really bad when we went and our son's pediatrician said she had others kids come in with the same thing.
5	Swimmers itch was a problem
5	The beach area needs to be more appealing and kept clean. The store employees need to be more welcoming. I think I've only had 1 or 2 employees say hi to us when we enter and we go there often. They should be more talkative. The bathrooms (by the store) are always dirty when we visit. Should have someone checking them hourly. Also having showers close by to the beach should be required. With all the duck poop I'm sure swimmers itch is very high here and not just that, people like to shower after they swim. Shouldn't allow pets on beach area. Some people are gross and let their dogs pee/poop where ever and don't clean it. Should have designated areas for dogs. Not be allowed pavilion, beach, park or grill area. Just gross in my opinion
5	The boat launch area is busy, causing pollution in the water. Many do not use the boat wash to remove invasive species, bringing them into the lake.
5	The campground was crowded and noisy
5	The park was crowded, the sites weren't that nice (open and on top of each other), and the bathhouse had half the showers closed the whole week we were there even though it was crowded.
5	The sites- they need to be kept up better
5	The state park is extremely crowded in the summer. It's sometimes very loud and disruptive and unpleasant because of the crowds.

5	Too many boats
5	Too much goose poop near the boat launch and the swimmers itch.
5	Wave runnersuncontrolled and dangerous for others
4	Observed boat wash being bypassed and not used
4	There has been a problem with Swimmer's Itch in recent years.
4	Worried about swimmers itch
3	beach doesn't seem as clean same with bathrooms and park store
3	Crowded lagoon.
3	Dogs, dirty facilities, noise late at night.
3	It was a very raining week and the lots are uneven and create rivers through the campsite. Something needs be be done about controlling water run-off in improve camping experience.
3	swimmers itch
3	The dog beach is where we spend most the time at, and I was very disappointed that it was so unkept. There were weeds and sticks all in the sand, causing bugs to be all over and nowhere to relax at the beach.
3	The park is way too overused and too crowded especially during the summer
3	We all got swimmers itch-won't come back to swim
2	Enjoy the park
2	Lakes such as Higgin's are disappearing quickly. The control of invasive species should be a paramount concern.
2	OLD and dirty restrooms and shower facilities
2	Too crowded
1	Loud, drunk people. Very crowded. Dated bath facilities with cold showers
1	Nice boat launch
1	Very poor camping facilities
1	Your trafficking of the boat launch is terrible. Your rangers will walk up and immediate turn around to avoid the constant fighting at the boat launch. I have witnesses these every time I come to the park. I sit in the launch in my boat and watch the boaters come in and the fights begin.

Q30: WHAT, IF ANY, CHANGES WOULD YOU MAKE TO IMPROVE YOUR EXPERIENCE AT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK?

ANSWERED	506
SKIPPED	451

1. Improve the boat wash with hot water to prevent new aquatic species into the lake
2. Restrict how shallow motorboats can anchor in the day park. Improve park store overall. Improve water runoff in campground. Update bathhouse in east end of campground. Better firewood if you expect us to purchase it there.
3. It would be nice if there were an area where people can tent camp with no RVs allowed so that it is quieter at night. Having more remote campsites available would be nice.
4. I would like to see that the quiet time at night be enforced because it gets noisy at night sometimes. The bathroom we camped near also made an machine like humming noise all night and day. I like to feel like I am in nature and hear natural sounds while I am camping. The swings in the playgrounds and near the store could use some lubricant to stop the squeaking so they are more enjoyable.
5. Emphasis on keeping the lake clean, especially through use of boat washing facilities at the 3 launch sites. Need to keep new aquatic species out of the lake!
6. control the Canadian goose feces!
7. More ranger involvement and security.
8. Include Mandatory Boat Washing
9. Being from out of state, we had never heard of Higgins Lake, so maybe more national advertising if the intent is to attract more visitors?
10. Better concession stand
11. Water depth is usually very shallow. Also concerns about water quality and swimmers itch.
12. Mandatory Boat Wash! Higgins is a wonderful lake and we must do everything possible to keep out invasive species.
13. put the channel markers in the water a little earlier in May.
14. None
15. Renovate the bathroom & shower building at the far east end of the park. It's ancient!
16. Charge a pet deposit- keep it if the pet owner leaves waste on the campsite, if they leave a dog unattended & barking on the campsite, or if they're caught with their dog on the beach. Or charge more for canine canping & use the revenue to employ a "pooper scooper" to keep the park cleaner. Create more sandy beach area.
17. Better queing area
18. more ramps to launch boats, though Higgins Lake is crowded enough
19. Boat drive up restaurant
20. ???
21. paddle board rental
22. Boat Launch needs more supervision. People get very rowdy and rude.
23. Fix restrooms/showers. Perhaps add small paved paths from end of loops to near beach. More Rangers patrolling park that will back up rules.
24. Make sure there is bathroom access when they're being cleaned daily and especially during deep cleaning weekly. Make sure the campsites and fire pits are checked and cleaned between campers when possible.
25. limit the decibel level of noise on the lake. Some of the larger boats with dual 300-350 engines are so loud it is sometimes unbearable. I shouldn't have to worry about losing my hearing on and off the lake.
26. Broadband access
27. Volleyball courts
28. Minimize swimmers itch
29. Add a boat wash
30. More outdoor concerts
31. Improve the boat wash and man it so that all out of area boats are required to be washed to help keep invasive species out of the lake.
32. Pave the new bike trail
33. None
34. More Beach area
35. Add a marina
36. None
37. Paved bike trail
38. We know that on the 4th of July we have to park our boat away from the "party area" it's not a great environment for younger kids as many choose it as a party spot. I am fortunate to live here year round.
39. Not sure
40. More patrols during quiet time
41. A hot water boat wash could improve the park and lake.
42. More oversight by rangers. I would make the campsites larger.
43. Make boat washes mandatory in Michigan, especially at Higgins Lake.
44. We have our own place on the west side of Higgins. We visit by boat often. We adore the park and hope the work continues on eliminating swimmers itch
45. need to have mandatory boat washes and control of how many can come into the park
46. More sandy beach space. Especially lakeside at the lagoon.
47. Bike trails

48. None
49. Would cap the number of boats allowed in the lagoon on peak weekends during the summer (Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day).
50. Pontoons could be a little less "worn".
51. Maintain a hot water boat wash
52. Bike trail. Better conditions to ride around the lake.
53. No swimmers itch
54. Docks at boat launches to short. Need to add additional 10 feet to make safe.
55. Install a hot water boat wash with strict guidelines
56. Bigger area for dogs to swim.
57. I would change the fact that the DNR yells at us for having our dog swimming in the lake by the south park store
58. All boats have to be washed before launch
59. Eliminating awimmer's itch!!
60. More help in keeping the area cleaned or policing the area more.
61. Boat wash mandated
62. none
63. Cleanliness of boats coming into the lake. Hot water boat wash with staff to make sure high risk boats are clean
64. NONE, love it!
65. More complete boat wash program to keep invasive species from entering Higgins Lake
66. Not much I love it. Could use less swimmers itch although I've never had it but I hear about it at least once a year
67. When you walk through the park in the evening, the amount of bonfires makes it almost unbearable to walk through all the smoke... This is a tough one because people like bonfires, but its stinks pretty bad, lots of smoke.
68. a program which prevents new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake must be put in place now. It is essential that this program include boat washes that use hot water at ALL three state boat launch sites.
69. Make watercraft washing mandatory for those coming from another body of water . . . which is often the case a the South State Park.
70. Beach should be raked and cleaned better. Lake should be cleaned of leaves and debris. Larger beach, remove weeds.
71. Mandatory Boat Wash for out of state boats
72. maybe a couple of restroom renovations but your already working on that.
73. Have fewer boats allowed.
74. Same answer as 20.
75. Mandate, and staff, a boat wash that uses hot water to keep invasive species out.
76. None
77. a playscape for the grand-kids.
78. Get rid of all swimmers itch
79. The Boat Wash or some better form of keeping invasive species from entering the lake
80. program which prevents new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake must be put in place now. It is essential that this program include boat washes that use hot water at all three state boat launch sites.
81. more police patrol on holiday weekends. Reduce drunk boating
82. Continue to monitor busy weekend boat traffic. Enforce washing of boats that could bring in invasive species.
83. Level blocks
84. Outdoor showers. Indoor changing area for day users"
85. Need immediate ongoing program to prevent introduction of new aquatic species entering Higgins Lake. Hot water boat washes at all 3 State launch sites.
86. Do something to prevent further contamination of zebra mussels.
87. Boat wash/ invasive species prevention
88. Staffed boat washes, using hot water, located at the three DNR Launch Sites on Higgins Lake. These launch sites are the North Higgins Lake State Park, South Higgins Lake State Park and West Launch.
89. I'd decrease the number of people who are allowed to use the park at any given and I'd limit the number of motor powered watercraft that are allowed on the lake at any given time with eye towards maintaining the pristine clarity and beauty of the lake forever.
90. Mandatory HOT water boat and trailer wash to prevent invasive species from entering our very special natural resource.
91. None
92. As a semi local user...there should be a mandatory boat wash for foreign water craft/ those being used on other lakes. The zebra mussels and milfoil have taken a toll. Be great if no new threats were imported.
93. clean out underwater vegetation
94. It would be nice if you could make the beaches bigger, I know water erosion plays a big part in this.
95. a program which prevents new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake must be put in place now. It is essential that this program include boat washes that use hot water at ALL three state boat launch sites.
96. Boat wash
97. Less tree destruction
98. boat washes to stop invasive species from entering the lake
99. clearer signage....especially exiting
100. Stop cutting all the trees ! The beauty has been taken away from some of the park .

101. none
102. Put green/red blinking lights at the entrance to the lagoon - sometimes it's hard to find at night- a couple of buoys at the front of the channel and two at the steel entrance- coast guard can help you out- this is a no brainier.
103. Boat washes to keep evasive species out
104. Do not allow huge boats
105. More control of boats coming onto the lake from other lakes and better noise control for those boats on the lake
106. Require boat washing of all boats using facility.
107. Hot water boat wash.
108. More trash containers
109. None
110. Boat launch regulations to wash etc
111. Better boat wash mandatory
112. Boat washes using hot water to ensure that outside species do not enter the lake.
113. Don't know...I would think have a person monitoring the use of the boat wash would be very positive
114. Make boat washing MANDATORY before allowing boats from other lakes to enter Higgins. That lake appears to be changing, and not in a good way.
115. staff the boat wash to prevent invasive species coming into Higgins Lake
116. Not sure.
117. Be more careful about boat washing. Afraid of additional invasive species (plant and animal) coming in from there.
118. I would like the DNR to establish a program to assist Higgins Lake in preventing new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake. It is very important that this program is in place now. It is essential that this program include boat washes that use hot water at ALL three state boat launch sites.
119. The implementation of a mandatory hot water boat wash.
120. Force Boat washing
121. a program which prevents new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake must be put in place now. It is essential that this program include boat washes that use hot water at ALL three state boat launch sites
122. require all boats go through & use installed boat wash
123. Ensuring that the lake is protected by making boat washing for at risk boats mandatory
124. Remove the zebra mussels around the swimming area. Make sure also that boats do not moor long term.
125. A mandatory boat wash at all public access sites is imperative to prevent further invasive species being introduced to Higgins Lake.
126. Cleaner beach, more ice cream and food choices at the store including healthy choices of food, eliminate the Fourth of July party. Swimmers itch
127. Limit size of boats allowed on lake and enforce noise limits.
128. The state park needs to be involved and support efforts to reduce swimmers itch and to prevent invasive species.
129. Get rid of swimmers itch and too many local boaters hanging out in water on weekends with loud music and trash in water
130. Protecting the lake by adding a boat wash for all boats.
131. Boat washes to prevent invasive species in the lake.
132. Make boaters use boat wash
133. Add boat washes that use hot water. We need to keep our lake clean!
134. Better regulation of boat size/engine noise. Better regulation of boat cleaning before launching.
135. Restrict loud music
136. Keep the swimmers itch parasite out of the water
137. Get rid of swimmers itch
138. Improve the boat wash to assure no invasive species are introduced to Higgins Lake
139. More daytime mooring on sandy beaches.
140. More full hookups
141. Keep wild crazy party's over the 4th of July out! Alcohol was way out of hand for a while- disrespectful college parties.
142. Enforce boat noise ordinances. Too many large engine boats.
143. Improve boat washing facilities
144. Hot water at boat wash. Full time attendant overseeing the launch site. More and more modern-day boats are being built with onboard water ballasts.... you know the rest of the story!
145. Boat wash-mandatory, with heated and/or treated water to prevent invasive species entering the lake from other watersheds.
146. Mandatory warm water boat wash and motor flush for visiting boats from other lakes
147. I feel...like the campers are packed in there like sardines in a can
148. None
149. Really needs a new bathhouse in loop 1 like rest of park.
150. Eliminate the zebra snails
151. Demolish and rebuild new restroom and shower facility (first building when entering the camping area).
152. Rest rooms should be open.
153. Nice family playground for kids, wheel chair access to water
154. New restroom in first loop

155. Stop scaring visitors about Swimmers Itch with signs everywhere
156. Need handicap dock with railing to get up on walking trail to use the bathroom. Spouse uses walker....
157. More room for boat docking
158. Update bathrooms & possibly grow more grass on sites. Most have become all dirt sites.
159. The park used to allow access for commercial vendors offering parasailing. Very disapointed when this was discontinued. There is almost no commercial access to the lake, so would like to see the DNR offer this kind of access.
160. The parties on the boats are very inappropriate for families. You cannot even have a view of the lake, because they surround the swim area. Swimmers cant even go out to the drop off anymore. The crowding, debris, and obnoxious noise from these boats is very unpleasant. I have been coming to the south state park for over 30 years, with my family and it is just not the same peaceful beautiful place it used to be. Swim area has been lessened to such a small area to accommodate the boats, which is just a shame.. the boaters who crowd around the main swim area on a regular basis to party, should be moved to go somewhere (anywhere else!) maybe over by the boat launch swim areas! Our kids and grandchildren cannot swim without have to be subjected to their wild party scenes; which can include nudity, chicken fights, excessive consumption alcohol, obnoxious music, multiple types of garbage thrown in the lake, and fuel leaking creating oil floating on the water. This has really deterred us from coming to the park and we are glad you are asking these questions. Thanks for giving us a voice.
161. Later check out time
162. More quiet activities such as nature programs. discourage rowdy activities
163. Back charge campers who leave their site a mess! Encourage campers to "leave no trace".
164. Trail system and/or bike path
165. Restrict the number and size of boats allowed in. Let the lagoon fill in enough to facilitate this change.
166. Nope its good
167. More shower facilities and more full hookup lots
168. Eliminate swimmer's itch. Add more full hook up sites. The bike trail around Higgens Lake sounds great to me.
169. have wifi available thru out the park
170. take better care of picnic tables.more sand on shore line.update playground equip.
171. Larger boat launch, seems to get really jammed up often.
172. Having a play ground for young kids
173. Improve beach area. Designate dog areas. Install showers near beach area. Keep bathrooms/beach area clean
174. Improve the condition of the park, return it to the levels of excellence it once achieved. Enforce speed limits within the park more stringently as there are obviously small children everywhere and find a new plan to keep the sites maintained as far as grass cutting general lawn care (filling in of grass, fixing holes, etc).
175. Clean up the beach on Lagoon
176. Stricter rules and safety plans for kids and dogs. More walk throughs by park staff to do a little monitor on people, children,dog and behavior. Did not see many staff around.
177. Plant more grass/preserve sites that need TLC.
178. The bathrooms are a problem pretty much every year. They back up quite often, close at inconvenient times and there are just not enough
179. The Beach / Swim area needs to have some work done to it it would be nice to have a long area of the beach for swimming that is free of any trees shrubs etc. and have a few more bench seats with in the area for you sit there enjoy the Veiw of the Lake. Also it would really be nice to have a wide paved walkway (pedestrians/bike) along the Lake walkway from the Dog beach to the boat basin (like the walkway that was put in around the boat basin).
180. Need healthy food options in camp store: nuts, fruit. Less worry over swimmers itch. sometimes it's too noisy. lots of boats!
181. Make the swim areas smaller to make room for boaters and work on the store
182. Rake beach more often
183. Beach area is limited. It would also be advantageous to monitor more proactively on larger crowd days to support less "crazy" behavior as a day progresses. I do not support reactive strategies by local law enforcement though that is sometimes required but more park ranger continued involvement to perhaps keep things controlled. Is more training necessary for rangers and summer crew?
184. more water hook-ups.
185. A little more reasonable enforcement of the rules
186. Dog access to lake
187. bathroom cleaning
188. Gaga ball pit. Large inflatable slides
189. cut down on rowdy behavior
190. None
191. better restrooms and hiking/nature trails
192. no changes
193. Marl Lake: an extra picnic table and repair work on the foot bridges. They can trip you up if you are not careful.
194. It was great. Perhaps more space for additional vehicles for campers to park more nearby
195. Better clean up. Other than that we adore the place.
196. public wifi thru out the campground, not just at the

- store
197. Better bath houses, more full hookup sites
 198. Less party/drunken crowd. Eliminate swimmers itch, add family water obstacle course.
 199. Reduce the number of geese pooping all over the boat well area, get rid of the swimmers itch.
 200. Updated bathrooms at the park store.
 201. All state parks need some form of an emergency phone. In a lot of s.p. cell phones do not work. All you should put a postal box in each s.p. they deliver mail to the park so why can't they pick up camper mail. Some state parks to mail a bill or letter you have to drive into a town and some are a distance away from the park. Then driving to mail letter etc takes away from the time in the park enjoy it.
 202. enforce noise rule's
 203. Would like to see a launch area specifically for kayaking. It's quite a hike to carry kayak.
 204. We love it just the way it is!
 205. We camp in an RV and full hookups are always a plus. We were not aware of these at S. Higgins, and would take advantage if there were more available.
 206. Rangers paying more attention to the dogs and drinking on the beach where it clearly states it's not allowed. A lot of issues with dogs bothering small kids last few years and rangers walking by say nothing.
 207. Na
 208. Don't allow as many boats and people into the park- especially on holiday weekends
 209. Many campsites require fill (flood plains during rain)
 210. More fish in marl
 211. Enforcement of noise and crowd related issues. Too many boaters are violating local noise regulations. Boats should be required to wash down prior to launch. I would suggest better markings for the entry to the lagoon. (Red/Green, lights or daymark with a range alignment mark/light centered for day and night navigation.)
 212. Management of swimmers itch
 213. I would immediately replace the east bathroom/shower and hire only willing summer help.
 214. Keep on top of tree trimming. We had a branch poke through our truck's tonnow cover.
 215. Improve hiking & multi-year trails
 216. Bigger beach area.
 217. The cigarette butts on the beach. That's the one thing that turns me off. I am there to enjoy whatever resources the beach has to offer, and People's discarded cigarettes take away from that.
 218. Increase parking for busy weekends
 219. More sites with grass
 220. It would be nice to have an alcohol free boat parking area
 221. Better bathroom facilities
 222. Get vendors that can supply good firewood to the campers. possibly delivered to the campsite
 223. The boat launch lagoon needs to be larger and the channel wider. It's difficult to navigate when there is heavy traffic and when it is windy. Larger boat have difficulty tying off to the docks at the ramp while retrieving trailers, especially when windy, because they are so short.
 224. None
 225. Sunny days on weekends Ha Ha
 226. The one bathroom building in the campground is in bad shape and should be renovated/updated.
 227. Bicycle path around the lake
 228. better cleaning of bathrooms
 229. More garbage cans need to be placed around the basin area (lagoon). Boaters can be lazy and not walk their trash up to the cans. Years ago there were more trash bins. The new recycle area is a good addition, but not enough. I want to see the beach area clean of trash and goose droppings.
 230. Quiet hours enforced better. More Officer presence.
 231. Better maintenance on restrooms
 232. Redo the park store and area around it
 233. none
 234. Larger sites. The park is so large with so many sites that it can be too busy with people
 235. Cleaner beaches and bathrooms. I am at this beach all throughout the summer and not just on weekends and holidays.
 236. Reservation system
 237. Add basketball courts
 238. no dogs
 239. The first loop bathroom/bath house desperately needs remodeling
 240. I've been coming to Higgins lake for 42 years and still love it every time
 241. More bicycle trails. Include natural settings with trails where possible (lake, park, nature views).
 242. Updating the bathrooms
 243. Clean up the lake. Some parts are weedy.
 244. enclosed pet beach and enclosed dog park
 245. More FULL HOOKUPS in the campsites.
 246. Plant some grass add more playground for kids
 247. More direction and assistance guiding traffic putting in boats and pulling out boat
 248. I would love to see the garbage cans moved further away from camp sites on some of the loops. There are a few sites I'll avoid reserving because they are too close and the odor is bad.

249. Clean the very small beach area
250. Update, and clean up
251. The state officers should be thankful they have a job their attitude is horrible towards the very people that pay their salary and benefits
252. Support the HLSIO funding
253. More products and gifts at store
254. Have the store open first of May
255. More full hook up
256. The park store could use improvement. Compared to my childhood, the toys are cheap and not unique to the park, the shelves are not well stocked and the souvenirs (clothing, mugs, etc) are very overpriced. I looked forward to going as a child, then taking my children. But now I don't think it's a very unique experience for my grandchildren.
257. More activities and buildings. Maybe a museum of history
258. More full hookup rv sites
259. The address
260. More full service hookups, expanded playgrounds, more children's activities.
261. Work on swimmers itch
262. Get rid of swimmers itch.
263. None
264. None
265. The park no being so uptight during Firemens memorial...Let people have a little bit of fun with lights & sirens. Maybe a light parade through the park would be fun!
266. I wouldn't make any but ask the park to be ready in ample time for memorial weekend
267. Improve roads and remove trees that limit camper placement. Some could be removed without effecting the beauty of the park while increasing the ease of using sites.
268. None
269. Clean up the swimmers itch problem in the lake
270. You are doing a good job. Just keep up with clean restrooms and keeping it litter free.
271. More consistent support at the boat launch abt busy time when people are coming off the water. It gets very scary down there and at times can feel unsafe due to tempers
272. More full hook up campsites.
273. Less goose poop
274. See comments about the 4th of July.
275. It would be great if the loud and rowdy party people had their own section of the beach. They distract from my enjoyment.
276. Continue keeping up with anti-swimmers itch efforts
277. No swimmers itch
278. Make the cost more non-resident friendly
279. More full hookups, replace north bathrooms, bike trails, finish middle camping loop, revisit price increases.
280. As stated earlier, more sites with water hook-up close to restrooms. Better control of water temp. in the showers. ? treat for swimmer's itch. This year we also had a problem with booking the site we wanted. Our chosen site wasn't available until two days after the start of our vacation. Would have liked to have booked an alternate site for those two nights then been able to book the other site for the rest of our trip. But had to wait for the second site until exactly six months before our arrival date. So ended up booking our alternate choice for the whole 15 nights, just to be sure we had a site. Then, two days later, the site we wanted was still available so booked it for the remaining 13 nights and had to go back in and cancel, and pay the penalty, for the last 13 nights at the alternate site we booked first. Lot of confusion for what should have been a much easier process.
281. The dog park should be separated into a couple sections. One for families with quiet pets. And one for people that bring their untrained wolf hounds to run around and chase each other, and then the laugh when the dog jumps on a person, eats their kids food, and take the table cloth away. Signs around the dog park area should explain proper dog etiquette in public areas. I like bringing our dog to the lake. But, I don't think my activity should ruin someone else's day. Unrelated, the park store has done an amazing job the last couple years. And having the public WiFi is a gamechanger. I now work from the state park some times. It is an incredible experience. The service at the store is great and the selection is good. Keep it up.
282. Maintenance improvements
283. Stricter enforcement of noise control & cracking down on underage drinking.
284. Keep boaters away from swim area. Keep their trash and litter away from beach.
285. Maybe more bath houses
286. Re-do the bathroom. Enforce animal rules (no dogs on the beach or in the water except designated areas), better response to complaints to established rules.
287. More trails. Large permanent pier into the lake to walk on and fish off of.
288. We loved the firewood selling at campsites, would like to also see ice sales along with firewood for campers at the sites.
289. cleaner bathroom area
290. Limiting the number of boats on the lake, better patrol in water and by the lagoon for alcohol consumption/ loud, crude music/inappropriate behavior, updated playground equipment by the park store
291. Make the activity tents at the host sites bigger and more wind resistant.

292. Updated playground toys
293. mandatory boat wash
294. live cam to check how busy the boat launch is?!
295. More parking
296. 50A hook ups
297. Improve the boat launch system. Maybe have someone there to control the caos a little on the busier days. Also there is a walking path that runs directly in front of the cars trying to set up to one of the boat launches at the South State Park. Please move this path or block it during busy times. As a driver trying to focus on the boat launch you have people and kids walking and on bikes pop out right in front of your car where you can't see them. Also way too many random people just walking through the boat launch, very dangerous and hard when your trying to focus on just getting your boat in or out quickly. Some people have large cars with large boats on trailers and you can't see the people.
298. Atv or ORV connector to out laying areas would greatly improve my experience
299. The boat launch, unsure how to make it more user friendly.. but it would be nice.
300. Do regular tree trimming.
301. Too many campsites sit very low and get puddles of water collecting in them and make it difficult for campers to use tents, maybe more dirt and grass needs to be brought in to keep the water from flooding campsites.
302. Bigger Boat Lagoon for busy times
303. paved camp sites for campers and full sewer hookups would be fantastic.
304. More full hookups for camping!
305. Upkeep at Marl Lake, bicycle trails around the park
306. Just update the one bathroom
307. Get wifi for the campground
308. Post and abide by restroom cleaning schedule. Do not clean them from 8 to 10 am.
309. Clear up the swimmer's itch.
310. The shower heads need to be cleaned to get rid of the mineral deposits. The bathrooms are nice and clean but showers need more maintenance
311. Water hookups to all sites
312. More parking
313. More Sewer Hookups for RV's
314. Campground facilities
315. Threat of swimmer's itch is always a concern- it would be a better trip if something could be done to prevent it
316. Recycling in each section. To much gasoline smell in the water from boats
317. more fill hook-ups
318. Keep both sections of bathrooms open. There are dog waste bags available, but there should be disposal containers there to deposit the waste.
319. Provide more full hook up campsites
320. A few more full hook-up sites
321. More table bbq sights needed.
322. Limit boating accesss to the lake
323. More full hookup.
324. More full hook up drive thru camp sites.
325. more patrols, kids at their own sites after 11, tame the group noise at 11
326. I wish swimmers itch was gone
327. Better volleyball nets. Maybe a shuffleboard court or some ultimate Frisbee nets.
328. Washer and dryer facility. Bike rentals.
329. build up some of the sites where there is a drop off. And reassess the sites for size of trailer that can be used in them.
330. Again, maybe build up the low spots in the campground. Also, maybe comb large debris from the beach
331. Provide additional boat launching / public entry areas throughout the entire lake
332. replace old bathroom/showers and maintain all better
333. Ramp up varied recreational/arts & crafts at the campground. There are many AFFORDABLE options for the above suggestion.
334. trees near roads need to be removed; some trees near back sites need to be removed; bare sites should be graveled or limestoned to reduce(at least make a pad) mud and improve drainage; oldest bathhouse should be replaced.
335. More area to anchor a boat and enjoy the sandy beach
336. Rule, or enforcement of rule, prohibiting loud music especially that with explicit lyrics. This is a common occurrence on weekends at the beach near the boat launch. Barking dogs occasionally a nuisance at campground.
337. Create more full hook up lots. With such a large group, we need about 8-10 of these lots.
338. limit Rvs on sites
339. Separate campers with dogs from those whom dont. Enforce quiet time and evict those who set off fireworks.
340. Update the stinky bathroom/shower facilities. You KNOW which one I'm talking about.
341. It would be nice if they had a post and rail fence with a wood chips for every walkway. This might help campers from walking through our site. The walkways don't stand out. Campers constantly walking through your campsite is a real problem. More grass on sites would be nice.
342. More full hook up sites
343. more full hook-ups

344. More full hook up for campers! Would like to see rangers walking the beach interacting with campers during afternoon times. Enforce the two vehicle limit on camp sites! Keep the kid activities coming!
345. more full hook up sites
346. wish they have more full hookup sites. however with the price increase for those sites it has become to pricey.
347. Since you fixed the ramp rage problem, none, that was my biggest complaint..
348. These two are opposites: I wish there were closer bathrooms and I wish there were more full hookup sites.
349. Keep the same stop cutting down trees as that is what is protecting the lake
350. Bathrooms
351. The sites- clean them and specifically put the lines for the next site- and do not allow people to come to your site before you leave- last year on one trip we had a lady screaming at us that they said we left- it was only 11am- and no we did not leave yet- my kids were upset and we had to rush to pack and leave, otherwise this lady may have laid an egg!!! Also the store needs to have better prices and more selection
352. Maybe some asphalt parking pads on some of the dirtier sites.
353. My only suggestion is to address the swimmers itch issue. It is the only shortcoming this campground has.
354. Need more grass on sites. To much sand
355. My experience was perfect.
356. Water available on more campsites.
357. more frequent cleaning /monitoring of rest rooms at park store
358. More parking for boats so that they are not in the campground. Larger campsites.
359. Better directions to bath room
360. It's annoying when campers park their cars by the lake and block the view for us campers up front. Generally the park staff does a good job of getting them to move but maybe some signs saying no parking would help. More full hook up sites would be great. We do always worry about getting swimmers itch so if there's anything that could be done to help that.
361. sewer and water at more sights.
362. Monitor and enforce quiet hours
363. Additional planned activities for kids would be nice. More restaurants and amenities like mini golf in the Higgins Lake area so we don't have to go into Houghton for these.
364. WiFi throughout the park
365. Renumber and make campsites larger so park is less crowded & noisy in summer
366. disallow dogs
367. Reconstruct far east restroom/showers. Take some campsites out of use on a rotating basis to help them regenerate. Add more campsites with water hookups (sewer hookup is not that important)
368. More full hook up sites
369. Need more full hook up sites
370. We have a 5th wheel, so I would like to see more Drive thru sites and upgraded 50 amp plug in
371. A pet friendly area between the channel and the beach, maybe relocate the pet area , and add the current pet area to the rest of the beach area.
372. nothing to add
373. More sites with water and sewer hook up
374. I have heard it's a party place in the summer, which is why we haven't gone in the summer.
375. More full hookup sites and more sand on the camping beaches.
376. update bathroom/shower facilities
377. Bigger sites. Consider expanding Lagoon for more capacity.
378. Cannot think of anything at this time.
379. Fix the swimmers itch and put full hook up at site 470 and around the area
380. Make sure it's level and a pull through site with full hook ups
381. More Walkways- 2 on every loop would be helpful
382. Water at camping sites
383. Paved bike trail, less motor boats allowed to put in
384. sitesmore FHU
385. None
386. Work on the hot water issues in the showers. Warm shower is very rare. Difficult for small children and pregnant guests.
387. Address the swimmers itch issue.
388. None
389. Continue efforts to eliminate swimmer's itch. Continue to add full hookup campsites.
390. ??
391. NO swimmers itch
392. Add more cabins (some of our family group stay in motels because they don't camp).
393. More traveled or paved RV sites.
394. I would like to see a reduced camping fee for off season camping and maybe even senior citizen discounts to encourage park use.
395. looking for a dump station access on our way home, this was listed as being open and after detouring I found it had been closed for some time. wish the online was kept up better.
396. More than one dog beach

397. Fix the showers
398. More full hookups camping sites
399. allow for more driveups in the morning and stop this 100% advance reservation stuff. Cut it back to like 85%
400. More full hook up sites
401. Improve bath house on east loop
402. Drainage of some camping spots by the lake needs to be improved
403. Improve on the water drainage after a rain. Flooding is quite bad.
404. I don't like the pet friendly beach
405. PLEASE make all sites full hook up!!
406. Everything was great
407. More full hook ups, improve swimmers itch
408. Eliminate the swimmers itch.
409. better bathrooms bigger more secluded campsites
410. More full hookup sites.
411. Would love additional beach toward boat launch for pets. The one pet beach is always the most crowded of all the beaches it seems.
412. More full hook up sites
413. More full hookup sites.
414. very thing seems to work for me
415. Put in a live stream cam at the boat launch.
416. Add pickleball courts.
417. Try to keep the swimmers itch under control. My family has never got it but I've heard a lot of complaints.
418. Kick out the loud people! I should not have to listen to loud explicit lyrics with my small children at 2am
419. Better dog control
420. Would like to see the Rangers be consistent or at least fair in enforcement of park rules (vehicles per site, dogs on the beach, inconsiderate campers)
421. As earlier stated would like to see at least one more bath house.
422. move the dog area as far as possible away from the lakefront to help protect the quality of water
423. Loved olden days when rangers walked up and down roads at night, helped monitor excessive drinkers
424. None
425. Would be nice to have Park store deliver firewood to camp site
426. More active supervision at the Boat launch. Too many people not taking their turns in an orderly fashion. Need some directing boats coming on and off the lagoon. Also having someone police the lake so that people do not come close to kayakers with their motor boats. Give some tickets out so people get the message.
427. make a better reservation system.
428. Add more full hook up sites.
429. More full hookups
430. 1) Better control of rain water runoff 2) Install grey water cisterns for tent campers (similar to Orchard Beach)
431. More security at the boat ramps...
432. More full hookup sites, better way to reserve sites. It is too hard to reserve sites, site looks available for the time period, and then the morning you are able to reserve it disappears as soon as you can reserve it.
433. Definitely. There is a great need for more camping spots. If you don't book early on the year you are at the mercy of a spot here or there if lucky. You are always packed. More spaces are a must. The secret is out and now that everyone knows about Higgins lake it is getting super crowded.
434. Get a handle on the party atmosphere that goes on just anchored on the shores of the S. State park most every nice weekend.
435. Update the bathroom/showers in the very first loop.
436. Thank you for dog-friendly spaces!
437. More full hook up sites
438. better choices of food in camp store
439. more full hook up camping sites
440. The older bathrooms within the campground need to be updated like the other bathrooms have been.
441. Fewer campsites- I don't like being right on top of other campers. Some of the sites "pool" water and get muddy when it rains. Not sure how it could be fixed but it makes camping in those sites unpleasant.
442. More full hook ups.
443. Maybe a few more cleared entries to beach from parking lot, a few more picnic tables on beach, few more grills.
444. Get rid of the swimmers itch problem and it would be perfect!
445. allow camping in the western sections in later fall. but do not open the bath rooms in those areas
446. Limit college groups and big groups, they tend to be to loud
447. More family friendly
448. Enforcement of dogs in designated areas only; too many boats and people on holidays, weekends at public beach area with heavy drinking going on; provide porta potties near that area--too many urinating in water rather than walking to bath house.
449. See above. The restrooms are very well built. Much better than what was used at Holly. Shower heads need help
450. Dish washing tubs/stations at restrooms.
451. Update the bathrooms
452. More frequent ranger patrols at night.

453. Space the sites out, trees between sites.
454. Better playgrounds, clean the beach sand
455. Swimmer's itch needs to be eradicated from Higgins Lake. The lake is pretty much useless unless you're only going out on a boat.
456. More full hook-up sites, free wi-fi.
457. more water taps
458. Add more trees that could provide more privacy between sites or space out the sites differently. People walked through our site the whole week.
459. Better monitoring of obnoxious guests walking around screaming obscenities at night.
460. I think the DNR should crack down on site usage. Sometimes on holiday weekends, you get multiple family units using a single site. IE: Mom/Dad have a site with Son/Grandkids and Daughter/Grandkids. These should be individual sites. It over uses the sites and causes crowding and congestion in the park and bath house facilities.
461. Camp sites could be maintained better. Most people dislike new firepits
462. None
463. Change the dumpster trash pickup time to not be so early in the morning- it wakes everyone up.
464. More full hook up sites, and improve the conditions of the roads. Maintenance of the trees, I.e. remove dead branches
465. Add more full hook-ups and WiFi
466. We would love to see another area to take dogs in the water. Unfortunately, some people go in areas not allowed but it would be nice to have some more space set aside, When several dogs are trying to use the same area, it can be difficult for the humans and dogs. Just like not all people get along, not all dogs get along either.
467. Interested in winter events (snow shoe or cross country skiing); hoping to retire to the area in the next 5 years.
468. I would have someone rake the beaches and also if possible expand the dog beach. There is very limited sandy area to relax. If some of the trees were cut back, then it would allow for more sun at the beach.
469. Cleanliness on beaches, within camping area, bathrooms/showers could be improved. Comparing to Ludington State Park, Higgins seems to be less clean overall.
470. a store on the camping side with supplies would be nice. It's quite a walk to go all the way over to that store and i avoid driving when camping as much as i can.
471. Our kids would enjoy some updated playground equipment.
472. Need to add more full hook-up sites. Need to make the smaller sites bigger due to accommodating the guests with the new bigger campers. You should assigned people with tents and/or pop-up campers to the smaller sites due to not taking the big sites for guests that need the space. You should look at the sites, you might need to start combining a couple sites together to accommodate everybody (then just renumber the sites).
473. Bathrooms. Wood is too far away to purchase and carry so far to car. Need more staff in store
474. see # 22
475. None that I can think of
476. I understand that this problem above is being addressed.
477. Just Larger lots...and 50 amp service.
478. too many dirt sites. Would be nice to have more grass areas
479. Have pre-check in online, so you won't have to wait in line with your RV, camper to check in and wait and wait. The manual check-in process HAS improved.
480. Enforce dog rules
481. More sites with 50 amp electrical
482. Improve campsite grades to reduce flooding when it rains. Some water pooling is expected, but many sites are under water with just a slight to moderate rain.
483. Full hook ups at more/all the campsites.
484. More full hookup lots!!!
485. Nothing really. We are pleased with the park in general.
486. Water lines available as some campsites. I would pay a premium to use those sites. I would love internet access, even if had to pay a premium.
487. Better enforcement of dog leash rules. We have 2 dogs which are always leashed. But we almost always encounter unleashed dogs.
488. Need more bathroom facilities. Need more parking for boat trailers/extra vehicles
489. Putting in more full-hook up sites would be a huge improvement.
490. Offer more FULL HOOK-UP SITES so we don't have to fit for a site. Also, I think you need to look at each site due to accommodating the bigger trailers now days. Some of those sites are so small and back in the day those were sites were big. If your gonna keep the small sites, then those should only be for tent campers and pop-up campers. This would at lease save the bigger sites for the people that need the room for a bigger camper.
491. a few more RV sites with trees/privacy.
492. Eliminate swimmers itch
493. Educate campers on etiquette and emphasis on keeping site clean.
494. More camping sites for large vehicles.
495. a little more privacy
496. Needs better access to shoreline fishing
497. Monitor the Boat bay area for loud music from boats that are beached there. It was very disappointing to

hear music with cuss words and explicit lyrics loud enough to reach all the way to our campsite.

- 498. Treat swimmers itch
- 499. Expand!
- 500. I would improve the policing of the boat launch. If this wasn't the best launch in town, I would go elsewhere to avoid this problem.
- 501. More full hook up sites
- 502. Update the bathrooms on the east loop. But I heard they are doing that this year.
- 503. Loop one bath facility needs upgrade.
- 504. Grass!
- 505. I would suggest being more prepared at the beginning of the season for early Memorial Day weekend campers. Workers were actively picking up/blowing leaves when we arrived which increased mosquito population and movement as well as increased noise.
- 506. More full hookup sites would be great.
- 507. none

Q31: PLEASE SHARE ANY OTHER THOUGHTS YOU MAY HAVE ON SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK AND/OR THE MANAGEMENT PLANNING PROCESS.

ANSWERED	261
SKIPPED	696

1. Keep the dog parks- they are a reason to visit. Boat launch & parking is good. Water is awesome if you can get out into it without tripping over motorboat anchors. Continue to control # of geese & ducks along shoreline.
2. We would like to see the natural beauty and wildlife of the Higgins Lake area be preserved as much as possible. We would like to hear the loons on the lake while visiting.
3. I would like to see the forested areas preserved. I don't like to see trees cut down for pipelines or other similar projects. I enjoy the park store and ice cream shop that have in there.
4. More trees need to be planted. Need a manager to talk to the campers! More children events.
5. I think you're doing a great job keeping the area clean and natural. A nicer hotel in the area again may attract more out of town visitors.
6. Mandatory Boat Wash! Higgins is a wonderful lake and we must do everything possible to keep out invasive species.
7. None
8. Seems perfect to me
9. Would be nice to see a cabin available for rent on Marl Lake. A fishing pier at Marl Lake. Backcountry/hike-in campsites at Marl Lake
10. perhaps add volley ball nets
11. Beach erosion and tree loss needs to be addressed.
12. Follow up and report on actions to control and limit Swimmers Itch problem.
13. Have pet friendly beaches at each end and in the middle. We camp in the far west loop and there's a lot of pet traffic. People don't always clean up after their pets even though waste bags are provided.
14. I like the fact that people work very hard to keep unwanted species out of the lake. Swimmer's itch is almost non-existent. YAY!!
15. Add and staff a boat wash
16. Improve the boat wash and man it so that all out of area boats are required to be washed to help keep invasive species out of the lake.
17. support boat washes to prevent introduction of invasive aquatic species and noise enforcement.
18. Continue with the swimmers itch program. I have been coming to Higgins for 56 years. Not until the last 4-5

years has there been a problem with the swimmers itch. The last year was the first time I did not get swimmers itch in the last 4 years. Please continue with this program. I enjoy swimming in this lake and would like my future grandchildren to be able to swim in this beautiful lake.

19. Continue to hire friendly staff. It makes all the difference.
20. Must keep the lake from outside species invading the lake
21. We need a hot water boat wash there to keep invasive species out of our beautiful lake.
22. I have been vacationing at Higgins Lake for over 60 years, and am concerned about the water quality/ clarity. It is still beautiful, but we must be proactive to maintain it.
23. Allow the professionals to continue their work on the keeping the lake clean and beautiful. My family has been coming to the lake for generations (since 1930's). The lake is what brings visitors to the area!
24. In desperate need of new restaurants and local businesses.
25. None
26. Provide hot water boat wash service to ensure new aquatic species don't enter the lake.
27. A program which prevents new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake must be put in place now. It is essential that this program include boat washes that use hot water at ALL three state boat launch sites.
28. I would like to see hot water for boat washing in and out of our beautiful lake to prevent invasive aquatic creatures. Also, to keep the ducks out that help produce the swimmers itch.
29. As a frequent swimmer and boater on Higgins Lake, I think that a program which prevents new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake must be put in place now. It is essential that this program include boat washes that use hot water at ALL three state boat launch sites.
30. Establishing a program which prevents new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake must be put in place now.
31. Include a park employee to run the hot water boat wash
32. Wish they had hot water boat washes to prevent aquatic species from entering the lake.
33. Better food selection at park store. Beach area at park store to small. Need to expand eastward by removing couple trees and adding more sand space.
34. In the survey there will be places where comments can be made. It is in this comment section that you have the opportunity to state that a program which prevents new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake must be put in place now. It is essential that this program include boat washes that use hot water at ALL three state boat launch sites.
35. Offer overnight parking at boat launch.
36. Please continue to fight swimmer's itch!!
37. Keeping the lake clean !! More effort made to keep foreign aquatic element for the lake.
38. Just more patrolling or monitoring of people around the boat launch, and mandatory boat wash for all boats entering the lake
39. invasive species, swimmers itch
40. Anything that can be done especially in the water to remove the mollusks. We'd be willing to come pick them out of the lake if the state provided something to put them in to haul them away. Especially in the south sand bar. Don't know if that would help to lower the number of them or not.
41. I support that boat washing should be a regulation for saving our lake. I was raised on Higgins Lake and I now bring my children here too. Higgins Lake has a reputation as a generational lake. Generation after generation of many families have memories on Higgins Lake. Higgins Lake is a special lake that is one that needs to be saved from invasive species and visitors that don't have that special connection.
42. Invasive species are a major concern at Higgins Lake and we must do everything possible to prevent further aquatic species from invading the lake
43. Overall great place I hope it continues to thrive
44. a program which prevents new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake must be put in place now. It is essential that this program include boat washes that use hot water at ALL three state boat launch sites.
45. maybe have a few more amenities at the park store. still enjoy the convenience of the store
46. I think that allowing too many boats into the lake can cause a less enjoyable experience from boat traffic, boat waves and potential pollution and invasive species.
47. Zebra mussels and swimmer's itch have ruined many swimming experiences over the past several years which didn't exist 30 to 40 years ago. Please do what you can with boat washes, etc. to return our lake to its clarity and beauty.
48. Need a staffed boat wash with hot water to keep invasive species out of the lake
49. Keep working on eliminating swimmer itch, that is extremely important.
50. Seeing this involves the HLPOA, I would think their interest is to reduce the number of boats. I would prefer to open the roadends and reduce the number of boats coming in from the park. Boats on hoist don't bring in unwanted species.
51. As long as we are looking at a process to keep Higgins clean in regards to foreign water species infestation. That includes swimmers itch.
52. Seems good to me
53. Educate camping boaters the importance of washing

- their boats before entering the lake to protect from invasive species contamination if Higgins Lake.
54. Drainage pumps
 55. I have a deep concern for the water quality of the lake and strongly support staffed boat washes, using hot water, located at the three DNR Launch Sites on Higgins Lake. These launch sites are the North Higgins Lake State Park, South Higgins Lake State Park and West Launch.
 56. Keep in mind that in as much as the lake is a living organism it deserves respectful stewardship that is willing to acknowledge the finite qualities and nature of the ecosystems of which it consists. In order to protect its unique nature and beauty it is necessary to require hot water boat washes and limitation on its usage
 57. I was dismayed to read how many boat launches on a typical summer weekend. Is there anyway to limit this?
 58. a program which prevents new aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake must be put in place now. It is essential that this program include boat washes that use hot water at ALL three state boat launch sites.
 59. Seems well run, generally very clean, rangers are always kind and helpful!
 60. allow boaters to moor closer to the channel but not so close as to create a hazard.
 61. have all the visitors and home owners get together and pick the muscle zebras out. If everyone did a little that would amount to a lot.
 62. More guidance on keepin it clean sewer system and boat washings
 63. State needs to shop local ! The parks used to buy supplies to maintain the facilities local. Supports the communities.
 64. Might want to throw a few buoys on the sunken island and at the ends of the sandbars at mid-lake- I got caught there coming back from the north end one night. Warning at 3' depth.
 65. More zebra mussels at South Park than in previous years
 66. Hot water boat washes must be mandatory for all visiting boats! Invasive species are changing the lake for the worse. I've NEVER experienced seaweed on the lake bottom in front of my place until just recently. The cost could be split between taxpayer (we pay a lot anyway) and visiting boat owners.
 67. Better supervision of boat ramp use during busy times. Less experienced boaters often tie up spaces at the ramp when their boat isn't ready to be trailered.
 68. Stop invasive species and swimmers itch
 69. With all the traffic at the boat launch, it would be beneficial to have a program that prevents new aquatic species from entering the lake.
 70. Enforce boat washing!
 71. Please put in the trail around the lake that would be great.
 72. No comment.
 73. Focus on boat washing to keep Higgins Lake as pristine as it can be- already affected by invasive species introduced in the past
 74. Require a hot water boat wash to be done for all visitors coming to the lake.
 75. strongly encourage the adoption of programs to prevent invasive aquatic species from entering Higgins Lake. The zebra mussel populations are a nuisance and additional invasive species will harm the lake's ecological balance.
 76. Forced boat/trailer washing to prevent invasive species
 77. Require all boats go through & use installed boat wash. Monitor invasive species, educational programs on invasive species.
 78. Preventing invasive species from getting access to Higgins.
 79. Would like to see manned boat washes and hot water used to kill potential invasive species.
 80. Take necessary steps to protect the lake from any more non-native aquatic life. We are fighting Eurasian Milfoil and snails have taken over certain areas. The lake is deteriorating and more efforts must be taken to protect it.
 81. Must work to prevent invasive species. Need hot water boat washes at both parks and launch. We must take care of this valuable resource.
 82. Swimmers itch. I has been significantly better but there is still an issue at the beach at HL South Park
 83. We need hot water boat washes at all three state access points to prevent introduction of invasive species into the lake
 84. More biking, paddle boarding events to support environmental friendly use of the land and water.
 85. I would like to see mandatory hot water boat washes manned to prevent further invasive species and keep the lake as wonderful as possible.
 86. Minimize your he invasive species that boaters are putting in higgins lake
 87. Boat wash!
 88. Please continue to prioritize the prevention efforts to keep our lake from being invaded by species that could harm the beautiful lake my family enjoys!
 89. Require boat wash for all boats
 90. Put staff at boat wash
 91. It is essential to include boat washes that use hot water at ALL three state boat launch sites.
 92. I would like o see more viable, staffed, boat washing system at all of the Higgins lake State park locations with launches; invasive species of mollusks and weeds having become a real problem.
 93. Protect invasive species
 94. Last summer the staff did a much better job of keeping

- the wild parties to a minimum over the week of the 4th!
95. Confusing driving entrance to boat launch area.
 96. This single issue aside, I think the South Higgins State Park is beautiful place. Very rare to go a place over and over, for 40+ years and see that time stands still in the park. Priceless.
 97. Staff the boat wash, make it mandatory for non-Higgins berthed boats.
 98. Too big of a swimming area. Not a lot of people use the swimming area. Not enough boat space :(
 99. Coming to park for 40 years since a kid and then with my kids. Now just me and my spouse.
 100. PLEASE build & maintain tight cleaning schedule for the restroom & shower facilities.
 101. Restrict # of boats being launched each day
 102. One of the best state parks in the state! Updates would make it the best.
 103. More garbage cans throughout the park, better signage and enforcement of dog areas, especially near the swim area beach. Maybe bring back the decent food served in the park store again? New food is not good. The new paths are awesome, the parking has been greatly improved, thank you!! Love the improvements you are making!
 104. Maybe more mini cabins.
 105. Improve the septic system to ensure the lake is not being polluted
 106. I realize the South State Park is a huge revenue source for the park system, but at what cost to the environment and the peace and serenity of the area? A balance must be reached.
 107. A car show would be awesome
 108. One of my favorite parks to visit
 109. The bike path is a great idea. Signs to ask parents to remind kids of speed around park. The dog beach is good too. Maybe some written warnings and health signs on how long a dog can swim or be in hot sun would be a good idea! Not sure if they were there already.
 110. Stated above
 111. I love the snack bar/food truck!
 112. I love to walk the path along the shore/campground. Maybe extend the path? More playground equipment? I really like the new bathroom at Otsego lake park with wildflower rain garden.
 113. Love the proposed new bike trail around the lake idea. Can't wait for it to be completed!
 114. Considering the cost of camping, things could be generally better. Keeping more of your money in house might be warranted if that is not the case now. A little larger staff that's paid a little more might go a long way to making everyone's camping experience better.
 115. mandatory boat wash
 116. Get rid of site specific reservations, and get a handle on the swimmers itch
 117. We are Very Happy with the Park- and your improvements.
 118. I would if I could find access to the planning process. It was hard enough to get to this survey. Put the link on the first page!
 119. More park benches along lakeshore would be nice.
 120. The past 10 years or so, the park continues to improve day use, trails, docks, campsites.
 121. I love the improvements made in the past few years. More full hook ups, grading, new asphalt, extra parking, and bike paths. Grading was way overdue. Some sites had really low spots.
 122. Our visit was late in the season and there seemed to be adequate staff, the facilities were in great shape, and the campground hosts were VERY helpful!
 123. Na
 124. Keep up the good work.
 125. More emphasis should be placed on conservation and enjoyment of existing resources.
 126. Need more year-round activities
 127. I only live a few minutes away from the South State Park, and it's nice being able to take advantage of our beautiful resources around us.
 128. see if some of the local businesses would participate in a discount program for people camped at the park . when campers check in they could receive a dated paper good for the length of stay at the park that would offer a certain percent off of their visit to the participating businesses such as golf courses , bowling alleys , mini golf , restaurants etc .
 129. I view the South State Park as the party end of the lake. This is where the loudest of the party people hang out and seems to be where drunk boat parties take place.
 130. None
 131. I see a lot of trees being taken down every year. I think it would be nice to see more trees planted to take the place of those being cut down.
 132. more rangers patrolling and enforcing rules
 133. Continue with the trail/bike trail. Keep improving the store. Add more small covered picnic areas for smaller groups. The two large pavilions are great for large groups, but it would be nice to see some smaller ones.
 134. I think there is a need for more play structures in the campground /day use. For my children to use.
 135. I think you do a nice job... maybe more organized programs during the week for families to participate in
 136. Corrective action plan for the staff to check bathrooms (t-paper, soap, clean toilets, etc) multiple times a day, as well as scanning the beaches for trash, cigarette butts, etc.
 137. Wider range of programs

138. More full hook up sites
139. Just keep the lake clean and beautiful! Help keep swimmers itch out of our lake ??
140. Don't know.
141. need the dog beach to be enclosed the addition of a enclosed dog park and enclosed dog park
142. Less trees
143. I'm excited to see what's next. We really love this paradise
144. Need to incorporate user fees so we can preserve the lake for future generations.
145. We really love the park! My family has been camping there since 1959 and will continue to as long as we can! It's one of the only family traditions we still have.
146. Fire pits in campground are too high, air cannot get in and feed fire sometimes.
147. Get rid of swimmers itch.
148. More organization at the boat launch
149. Leaves removed, fire pits cleaned out, branches picked up, bad bits replaced all before a busy memorial weekend
150. Improve the trail around Marl lake
151. Our kids grew up here-we'd love to see the lake cleaned up so our grandkids could enjoy it!
152. The environment by itself is the draw. Please minimize any new structures or development.
153. This is one of our favorite parks. We love the pet friendly beach where we can take our whole family. We also love the playground equipment for the kids. It's well kept and we feel comfortable letting the kids play on it.
154. Please keep this park beautiful, and safe for all users, not just boaters. My family has been swimming at this park since it opened. By the way, we preferred the grass beach.
155. Their supervisor Rachel Roberts is amazing
156. Used to go often but moved from Michigan and while we've loved the State Parks, the fees are unreasonable and no longer make our visits possible.
157. Been camping here every year for 38 years. Campground getting a little "worn". But the beach is still the best in Michigan! Bike trail would be a great addition!
158. I am extremely pleased you are involving us in the process. I am happy that our voices will be heard. I would like to see the swim area expanded a little further out. It stays so shallow. And. The boats are so close in. The surround the beach over the weekend. The noise of the boats and parties could be shifted back toward the west and the boat ramp without any inconvenience to their activities. However, it would improve the quality of the beach area.
159. boats are too close to the people swimming, even if parked near. its too close
160. Love the trails and plan to utilize these for running and biking this summer!
161. Clean
162. Please don't let it turn into torch lake crazy during the 4th of July!
163. Atv or ORV connector to out laying areas would greatly improve my experience
164. Please update all the bathrooms and showers, and try and do something about the water that puddles up on many of the campsites by planting more grass.
165. I enjoy using my own DRY firewood and I couldn't afford to buy camp site wood.
166. I have to reserve camping for 2 weeks when I really just want the 2nd week in order to get the site I want. Unfortunately I have to wait 30 days to release the first week. This delays others from reserving it. Also is a costly process.
167. Try to keep the park as nice as it is today- I wouldn't add too much to the park since the recent boat dock additions. The campground facilities are excellent, in my opinion, the only thing I'd say is continually work to improve on the day use facilities.
168. Several people have learned how to use the scheduling system to schedule a reservation. And then cancel the beginning of the reservation to eventually get the dates that are desired. During this process, legit campers cannot get get reservations.
169. Winter camping with a shower facility open
170. None
171. Great park, take care of it and don't make it overused. Protect the quality of the lake. This makes the park.
172. Have been camping at the park for over 50 years
173. there are more dog and not supervised enough. Lots of dog poop.
174. More trash receptacles spaced out instead of a large group of trash receptacles spaced far apart.
175. larger dog beach area
176. Hope to enjoy more time in the future. Key word FUTURE!
177. Institute a Aquatic Invasive Species prevention program- Clean up the weeds in the lagoon
178. like to see more benches along beach path, more powerful boat wash one you have is useless, more trash cans, paved handicap sites
179. One concern there was the health of a tree at the site, dead branches coming down could hurt someone or cause lots of damage.
180. It is, by far, our favorite state park. We have been camping there for over 35 years.
181. Re-instate road-end public access to homeowners throughout the entire lake. This will enable visitors to come to the State Park via boat, visit the store, use trails, etc.

182. There is never enough activities for kids and teens to do. They get bored and don't want to come camping again.
183. more sites need to be made level and either asphalt or gravel/limestone pads need to be made in sites with no grass
184. Just more space to anchor a boat for the day on the lake
185. If you are not going to create more full hook up lots, you could make these available to campers that are staying for 10 days or more.
186. Way to much drinking and boating. Need more full hookups or extra staff to clean bathrooms and showers. Put money into what you need like fire pits and picnic tables, forget the bike trails.(yes I do take a bike camping, I don't feel new trails necessarily would be a good investment)
187. 3,4 and 5 cars on a site is unacceptable. Campers aren't using the overflow lot and Rangers aren't enforcing the 2 car per site rule.
188. cut as few trees as possible. many are getting cut down.
189. The bike trail around the lake would be fantastic..
190. We come here every memorial day and we love it. We just camp and swim but that's all we want to do.
191. Keep it natural
192. Protect the water shed of Higgins Lake. Lead by example for others.
193. Upgrade the bathrooms and clean them at least 2 times a day.
194. Think of the people camping there- give them respect and clean sites. We were there twice last year and one trip they let a scary woman on early and said we left- at 11am, and another the site was so filthy with litter it took us over an hour to clean up the trash on the site before setting up!
195. Leave the Lake level and the dam in place.
196. Planting more trees in the campground for shade would be a significant benefit.
197. The bathroom cleaning schedule should be on paper when checking in. We did Zumba on the beach a couple years ago. That was great! We need more of that. Loaning out of games like corn hole or horse shoes. Lots of other camp grounds do it for free
198. I didn't realize that trapping was allowed at Marl Lake. I don't like trapping, don't see it as a responsible way to kill animals. I wish trapping was not allowed at Higgins Lake/Marl Lake.
199. Personal welcome at entrance with map and explanations about why to use the boat wash
200. We love camping there. It's our favorite campground!
201. Keep up the good work!
202. The beaches of Higgins Lake are so beautiful, but we will only continue to camp there in the off season
203. More full hook up sites
204. Appreciate the chance to give input.
205. Pork store needs to be closer to the campground
206. With the basin, how about a dance for teens
207. Would like it to focus more on families in the summer from what I've heard
208. This our go to camping place in Michigan. We're from Ohio and don't have any parks that compare.
209. Enforce speed limits thru campground.
210. Full hook up on site 470
211. Any increase in ramp size or allotment of boat traffic on Higgins Lake would be a detriment to the area.
212. Additional Full hookup sites would be nice
213. Reduce the size of the campground
214. I don't like the talk of using kiln dried firewood in the parks. It would be too costly to purchase it and would really effect us using state parks for camping. We do all of our camping at state parks. We camp about a week each month in the summer
215. I haul our plastics/glassware 225 miles back to home. Wish I could recycle in the park.
216. Not sure it is your responsibility to educate campers but was surprised to find improper dumping being done with the mess being left for others to clean up, probably you. More, larger signage might help the hopeless.
217. More full hookup
218. The swimmers itch is a problem it does lower the quality of experience because it's the little kids that play in those shallow areas where it seems to be at the can't go out further where the water is deeper and colder
219. NA
220. Devise a plan to eradicate the swimmers itch. We will not visit the park during peak summer months do to our entire family contracting widespread swimmers itch regardless of all precautions taken. My children were crying and shaking with it. They did not want to go anywhere near the water after that.
221. Too much very loud music allowed to play on anchored boats!
222. I wish it was easier to get reservations if you're not on the website when it first comes up you can't get the sites you want. I liked it better when you could make a reservation in January for the year
223. the bike trail around the lake would be great
224. None
225. A paved running trail along the lake would be amazing
226. update the bathroom facilities. Combine some sites that are too close together. STOP RAISING THE CAMPING PRICE
227. Great park , great boat launch with the boat well , ample parking for trucks with trailers
228. We have camped there for 12 years with Grandkids (14 years prior to that with kids). The last 4-5 years there has been little to no enforcement regarding number of vehicles per site and "guests" that show up late and

- stay. We have witnessed Ranger driving by sites that have 3-5 vehicles on the site
229. Prepare a brief written history of the park that could be used as a handout (to include attendance figures and dates of added features at the park)
 230. remove all dogs from the park .
 231. It gets pretty crazy at times at the boat launches, I would like to see some more security there..
 232. Love the staff and park rangers
 233. People have told us that they cannot get a camping site, yet we've come to the park and see many open empty camp sites. Maybe if people are reserving and then just paying the penalty and not coming, there should be some reduction of penalty with enough advance notice that the lot can be reassigned.
 234. Thank you for dog-friendly spaces!
 235. update on the swimmers itch issue
 236. Goals should be to keep lake pristine, family oriented, less drinking, (and boat noise curtailed!)
 237. Don't let them remove the dam. The ecosystem has adapted to this years ago, and change will do harm to the lake as well as the surrounding areas
 238. Community fire pit located near the water that is lit nightly for all residence. The pit would be supplied with wood and lit 30 minutes before sunset. The community bonfire would only held on Friday and Saturday nights. I have seen Community bonfires at private parks and it is always a big hit. Many campers comment that the community bonfire one of their top highlights of the camping experience. This also provides a campfire experience to those that might not have the funds or ability to provide for their own.
 239. We hope to keep camping at South Higgins Lake State Park for years with our family. Any improvements for the camping experience will be great!
 240. The park itself was nice and have been there a couple times.
 241. Keep allowing campers to bring in their own wood. Do not put a tax on the firewood or only allow purchased wood to be burned- I will stop camping.
 242. Jet ski rentals would be nice at the park
 243. I think it's a good idea to look at the park as it exists and visit what the actual needs are in the park and try to balance how to best meet those needs with a plan that will strive to preserve the area.
 244. It is too bad that the local stores / restaurants have struggled and some closed.
 245. Concerned with health of Higgins Lake and effects of zebra snail infestation. This lake has been my favorite vacation destination my entire life and I love this area of any place in the state.
 246. A bike trail around the lake would be fantastic, looking forward to it.
 247. the lagoon area at the boat launch gets a little crazy at times and there doesn't seem to be much direction (or space) for how many people use the launch.
 248. Need to add more full hook-up sites. Need to make the smaller sites bigger due to accommodating the guests with the new bigger campers. You should assign people with tents and/or pop-up campers to the smaller sites due to not taking the big sites for guests that need the space. You should look at the sites, you might need to start combining a couple sites together to accommodate everybody (then just renumber the sites).
 249. camping reservation system remains a problem- the system cannot handle the high volumes of internet access during the period when people are accessing it 6 months prior to their stay date. Old problem!
 250. Take in to account what the users and taxpayers want, not what you may perceive they want. Thanks for taking the time and effort to reach out!
 251. None
 252. Add more full hookup lots to the park. It is crazy trying to get these lots 6 months out from our vacation time.
 253. It's nice to be able to make reservations as I remember when you had to drive up and take your chances
 254. It is a beautiful campground and we use it a few weekends each summer.
 255. We really like coming to South Higgins. Bigger sites and MORE full hook-up sites.
 256. It is my understanding that the door between the bathrooms should be open at all times with the exception of closing it so one side can be cleaned while the other is left open. This is how it is at all the State Parks we visit with the exception of South Higgins. The entire building is shut down for cleaning and the door between the two remains locked. Once again, this is the last building in the loops at the far end of the park. When I asked about the safety aspect of this I was told it's because the kids run through the building. I am fortunate to have a bathroom in my RV but what about those who don't and have to use the bathroom??? Also, I really like the fact that you permit the tank dumping company to come into the park. It is extremely helpful for those of us who stay the entire 15 nights.
 257. We will not camp there in the summer because it's too crowded and the other campers are often loud and obnoxious.
 258. We love the campground. Protecting the trees and the fishery is very important to us. The number/ size of dogs per site should be limited, or have an area for dog use. We do not have dogs, and it can be off-putting to end up next to a huge dog who is staring at and barking at our kids. The dog peeing on the trees right next to our stuff is pretty nasty too.
 259. Please make sure to add the policing of the boat launch in your plans. I am sure the Roscommon police department would appreciate it.
 260. Add WiFi. More full hookup sites. More recyclable stations.
 261. I would suggest spraying for mosquito's.

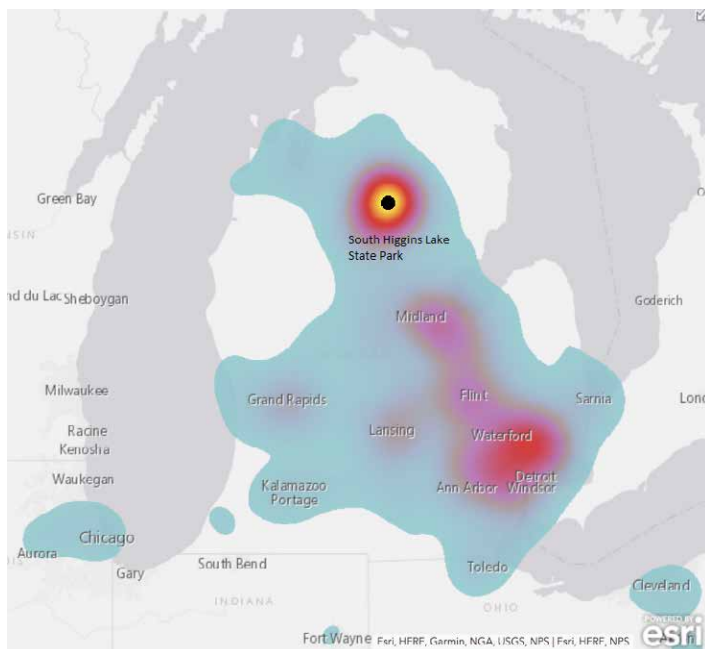
Q32: (OPTIONAL) SHARE A PHOTO OF YOUR EXPERIENCE AT SOUTH HIGGINS STATE PARK! BY UPLOADING A PHOTO, YOU GRANT PERMISSION TO THE DNR TO USE THE PHOTO.

ANSWERED	87
SKIPPED	870

Q33: WHAT IS THE ZIP CODE OF YOUR PRIMARY RESIDENCE?

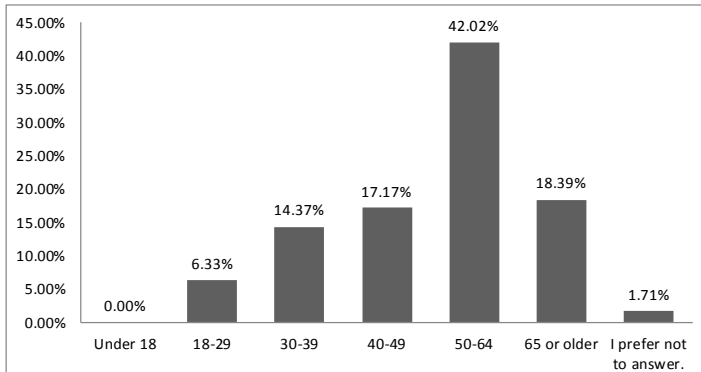
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
ZIP:	100.00%	813
ANSWERED		813
SKIPPED		144

Many of the park visitors reported a primary address in the vicinity of South Higgins Lake State Park as well as the wider in central/northern Michigan and southeast Michigan, which can be seen on the map above. A very small number of respondents were located outside of Michigan and are not shown on this map.



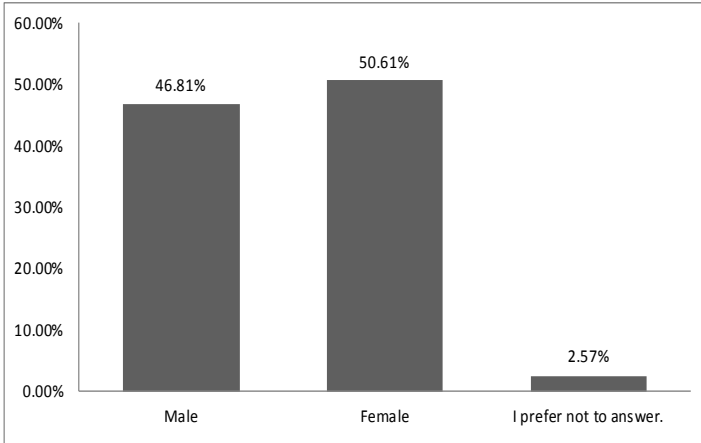
Q34: WHAT IS YOUR AGE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
UNDER 18	0.00%	0
18-29	6.33%	52
30-39	14.37%	118
40-49	17.17%	141
50-64	42.02%	345
65 OR OLDER	18.39%	151
I PREFER NOT TO ANSWER.	1.71%	14
ANSWERED		821
SKIPPED		136



Q35: WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
MALE	46.81%	382
FEMALE	50.61%	413
I PREFER NOT TO ANSWER.	2.57%	21
ANSWERED		816
SKIPPED		141





Michigan
Department of
Natural Resources



You're invited!

What

North and South Higgins Lake State Parks
General Management Plans
Stakeholder Input Meeting

When

Tuesday, April 24th
2:00 - 4:30 pm

Please RSVP to:

Plan Administrator Debbie Jensen
JensenD1@michigan.gov
517-284-6105

Where

Education Building - Main Branch Room
Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center
104 Conservation Dr, Roscommon, MI 48653

About the plans

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks & Recreation Division (PRD) is in the process of developing General Management Plans for both North and South Higgins Lake State Parks. The DNR uses General Management Plans to define a long-range planning and management strategy that protects the resources of the site while addressing recreation needs and opportunities. Public and stakeholder input is a critical component of the planning process.

About the meeting

The planning teams cordially invite you to attend a stakeholder input meeting! This is a combined meeting to solicit input for each of the two parks' respective plans. You may share thoughts for one or both parks. The team hopes to gather valuable insights from your organization and other key players. This session will include a brief presentation from the DNR on the planning process and progress, followed by individual and group exercises to gather input to inform the plans. We request that your organization send a maximum of three representatives so we may accommodate everyone. We hope to see you there!

Input survey

In addition, we are collecting input from park users via an online survey. You may share this link with any who may be interested.

North Higgins Lake State Park: <https://goo.gl/dHNbez>

South Higgins Lake State Park: <https://goo.gl/3XX5DB>

Project websites

www.mdnrmanagementplans.org/north-higgins-lake/

www.mdnrmanagementplans.org/south-higgins-lake/

For more information and to RSVP, please contact:

Plan Administrator Debbie Jensen
JensenD1@michigan.gov
517-284-6105

B.4 Summary of Stakeholder Input Workshop

To gather targeted input from governmental, non-profit, and business/tourism entities, the planning team invited over 70 stakeholders, both individuals and community groups, to participate in a facilitated input workshop held on April 24, 2018, from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center in Roscommon, Michigan. This meeting was held jointly with North Higgins Lake State Park as there was considerable overlap in the stakeholders. Representatives of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provided the stakeholders with a brief overview of South Higgins Lake State Park, including its natural features, cultural resources, and recreational offerings. The stakeholders were also presented the General Management Plan process, timeline, and an explanation of the plan elements that their input would inform: the Statements of Significance, the Management Zone map, and a list of Action Goals intended to be accomplished over the next ten years.

The stakeholders were divided into small-table discussion groups, which completed a series of exercises describing the park's context, the park itself, opportunities for partnerships, the park's potential benefit to the larger community, and the stakeholders' vision for the park's future. Each table then reported out to the larger group. The results of the table exercises are outlined below.

Icebreaker Question

When the stakeholders introduced themselves, they were asked to describe what matters most to them about either North and/or South Higgins Lake State Park. Their responses that pertain to South Higgins Lake State Park are below.

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO ME ABOUT SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK IS...
Continue easy access (maintain). Maintain the integrity of our natural resources. Maintain the history of the parks & the natural resources.
The park is so busy. Keeping it peaceful and orderly.
Use of boat wash, aquatic invasive species prevention
Boat wash success
Beach; concessions; Marl Lake
Heated, staffed boat washes to guard against introduction of new aquatic invasive species
Boat access to lake – fishing. Ice access to lake. Winter fishing.
Lake TRASH...speed limit.
Continued accessibility, positive long term environmental upkeep and impact on the lake, and also events that continue to make parks and area appealing.
Benefits the area
Accessibility; willingness to work with community groups
Safety & accessibility

STAKEHOLDER INPUT WORKSHOP ATTENDEES	
NAME	REPRESENTING
Bruce Rendon	Rep. Daire Rendon and Self
Sue Jock	Roscommon Metropolitan Recreation Authority
Shon Chmielewski	Crawford County Sheriff
Greg Semack	Higgins Lake Property Owners Association
Vicki Springstead	Higgins Lake Foundation
Fred Swinehart	Higgins Lake Property Owners Association
Suzanne Bates	Camp Westminster
Charlene Cornell	Higgins Lake Property Owners Association
Barb Selesky	Civilian Conservation Corps Chapter 129
Steve Sendek	Citizen at Large
Glenn Haight	Glenn Haight
Joan Skuta	Higgins Lake Foundation
William Sylvester	Friends of North Higgins
Tracy Smith	Higgins Lake Roscommon Chamber of Commerce
Brent Cryderman	Concessionaire – R.O.O.C.

PLANNING TEAM ATTENDEES	
NAME	REPRESENTING
Debbie Jensen	DNR: Management Plan Administrator
Josh Pellow	DNR: N. Higgins SP Unit Manager
Rachel Roberts	DNR: S. Higgins SP Unit Supervisor
Casey Gwisdala	DNR: N&S Higgins Lake SP Accounting Assistant
Scott Cook	DNR: Regional Planner
Bill Doan	DNR: District Supervisor
Amy Swainston	DNR: Trails Specialist
Lisa Gamero	DNR: Cultural Resources Analyst
Hillary Pine	DNR: Northern Lower Peninsula Historian, Michigan History Center
Lt. Brandon Kieft	DNR: District 5 Supervisor
Christy Summers	Planning Consultant
Caitlin Jackson	Planning Consultant



Exercise 1: Say one word or phrase that describes the Higgins Lake area.

Stakeholders' impressions of the Higgins Lake area include many positive attributes. Fishing, history, trails, natural beauty, and the year-round nature of the recreation opportunities were mentioned at two tables each. The area was described as peaceful, a treasure, a place for family, and a place for recreation. Negative characterizations describe crowding, development, and traffic congestion on the roads and the water.

ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #
Trout; Fishing – year around	1 & 2
History; Historic	1 & 2
Year around recreation; Year around destination – all-inclusive / accessible	1 & 2
Hiking trails are very scenic; Hiking – XC ski;	1 & 2
Pristine; beautiful/clear	1 & 2
Sailing	1
Crowded – developed	1
Sunsets	1
Destination	1
Family – grandkids!	1
Accessible	2
Beautiful/clear	2
Undeveloped/natural/old growth trees	2
Noisy/boat traffic – road congestion	2
Swimmers itch	2
Highway – too fast	2
Proximity to other recreation/parks	2
Peaceful	3
Clean water/clear	3
Aging	3
Treasure	3
Overgrown	3
Charming	3



Exercise 2: Say one word or phrase that describes the state park right now.

Stakeholders' most frequent characterizations of the park include that it is busy / congested, loud, that it has a boat wash on site, and is the site of some activities that are not child-friendly.

ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #
Busy, congested; congested on holidays	1, 2 & 3
Loud, noise	1 & 3
Boat wash on site	1 & 2
Some non-child activities; party park	2 & 3
Good waste control/sanitation	1
Modern	1
Well maintained	2
Kids activities – events	2
Playground updates – universal access	2
Access Marl	2
Trash	3
Fun	3

Exercise 3: Say one word or phrase that you want to describe the state park in the future.

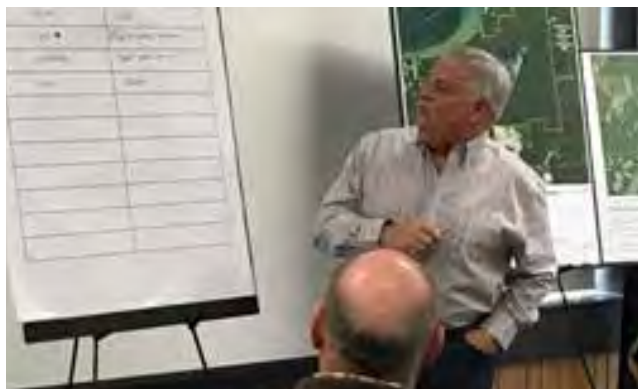
In the future, items that more than one table of stakeholders mentioned were that the park have a boat wash (one group described it as mandatory, and one group described it as heated and staffed), and for the park to be clean. Other thoughts were for the park to have different types of overnight accommodations, a universal access playground, to be pristine and not overdeveloped, to have enhanced children's programs, groomed trails, a beach, and homeostasis.

ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #
On site heated, staffed boat washes; mandatory boat wash	1, 2 & 3
Clean	1 & 3
Safe	1
Pristine	1
Lodging/yurts/cabins	2
Universal access playgrounds	2
Enhance explorer kids (ranger) programs	2
Groomed trails	2
No over develop – keep primitive areas	2
Beach	3
Homeostasis	3

Exercise 4: How can the state park benefit the wider community?

Stakeholders were asked to think about how the park could focus outward and benefit the community. Many of the suggestions centered around events and programs that the park could host for the community.

ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #
Educational programs (boat wash, walking tour technology, marine division/safety)	1
Marine patrol/increase funding	1
Continue connection to local sanitation system	1
State funding for economic development within park system	1
Engaging in kids activities – kids camping – swimming	2
Partnership schools – camps	2
Partner with area recreation group (we want groomer) xc skiing	2
One universal July fourth celebration	2
(MDNR) be more accessible to public (perception)	2
Open areas – controlled access – shooting range	2
Senior access or recreation/ideas “walk a park”	2
Educational events	3
Don't penalize with small craft fees	3
Keep access open	3
Easy access	3
Network with other rec. opportunities in area	3



Exercise 5: What are some collaboration & partnership opportunities that the state park presents for local communities and stakeholders?

The next exercise asked stakeholders to think about their own organizations and others and how they could offer partnership opportunities for the parks. The stakeholders had many ideas for organizations that could potentially partner with the parks, such as school districts, area chambers of commerce, non-profit organizations, and volunteer groups. Some potential collaborations and partnerships they present are employment opportunities for the community as well as events and educational activities.

ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #
Local school districts (Rosco & Grayling schools)	1, 2 & 3
Summer work crews (MRS)	1
Americorps	1
Local environmental associations/foundation	1
District health dept.	1
Soil conservation district	1
CISMA	1
Employment opportunities (MI WORKS, for example)	1
Area chambers	2
Collaboration/local accommodations	2
Area recreation authorities	2
Gahagan Nature Preserve – kids activities	2
Disseminate information public programs (swim, boating)	2
Local medias – newspapers- social media	2
Preservation associations (HLPKA)	2
Higgins Lake Foundation	3
Sunrise Run – “Rotary”	3
COOR	3
Kirtland Community College	3

Exercise 6: What improvements or changes would you like to see at the state parks? What things would stay the same?

Regarding improvements or changes, the ideas mentioned most frequently and prioritized the highest include a heated, staffed boat wash; a larger sand beach area, and a fishing pier. Working closer with law enforcement, groomed trails, increased lodging opportunities, and collaboration with local organizations were the next highest voted items. For items to stay the same, the highest voted item was Marl Lake.

IMPROVEMENTS OR CHANGES		
ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #	TOTAL VOTES
Heated, staffed boat wash	1 & 3	8
Increased sand, decrease water level? (lagoon, Marl Lake)	3	4
Fishing pier	3	4
Working Closer w/ law enforcement/marine patrol	1	3
Groomed trails	2	3
Lodging – opportunities – yurts/ cabins	2	3
Collaboration area organization groups	2	3
Wake boat – ban launching	1	1
Updated signage state wide	2	1
Bike rental	3	1
Pavilions	2	0
Area wi-fi	2	0
Trees – plants identification species – heightened protection (Marl Lake area)	2	0
STAY THE SAME		
Marl Lake	1	4
Maintain ecologically sensitive areas	1	2
Maintain – enforcement “keep peace”	2	2
Maintain historical atmosphere	2	2
Rachel	1	1
Park store	3	1

Final Exercise: Collective Priorities

The top two items from each table in the previous exercise were carried over into the “collective priorities” exercise. This allowed anyone to vote on ideas that came from tables other than their own. The two items that received the highest priority were the heated, staffed boat wash and an added fishing pier.

This input was considered by the planning team when creating a 10-year action plan.

ITEMS	VOTES
Heated, Staffed Boat Wash	10
Add a Fishing Pier	10
Increased Sand Beach (lower water level?)	7
Maintain Marl Lake	6
Collaborate with Area Organizations/Groups	5
Increased Lodging Opportunities	3

B.5 Tribal Communication



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



KEITH CREAGH
DIRECTOR

March 29, 2018

To: Chairman McClellan, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians
Mr. Berry, Natural Resources Department Manager of Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians
Chairman Sprague, Gun Lake Band of Pottawatomi Indians
Ms. Binoniemi-Smith, Environmental Director of Gun Lake Band of Pottawatomi Indians
Ogema Romanelli, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
Mr. Beaver, Natural Resources Director of Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
Chair Gasco Bently, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Mr. Craven, Natural Resources Director of Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Chairman Stuck, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians
Mr. Rodwan, Environmental Director of Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians
Chairman Warren, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
Dr. Kanine, Director of Natural Resources for Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
Chief Cloutier, Saginaw Chippewaw Indian Tribe
Mr. Seal, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe

The Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is in the process of developing general management plans for North Higgins Lake State Park, in Crawford County, Michigan and South Higgins Lake State Park in Roscommon County, Michigan.

North Higgins Lake State Park is located on the northern shores of Higgins Lake, approximately 12 miles south of the city of Grayling. The park provides year-round camping, including two mini-cabins, a swimming beach and boat launch on Higgins Lake, land open to hunting, and hiking, biking and cross-country ski trails that extend into the adjacent state forest land. The park's 429 acres are also home to the Historic Higgins Lake Nursery and Civilian Conservation Corps Museum as well as the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center.

South Higgins Lake State Park is located on the southern shore of the 10,000-acre Higgins Lake. The park features almost a mile of shoreline on the lake and provides nearly 400 campsites (including some full hook-up sites) a boat launch, swimming beach, and two pet-friendly areas along the shoreline. Marl Lake is included in the park's 1,000 acres and provides non-motorized/ electric motor boating opportunities, land open to hunting, and over five miles of hiking trails surrounding the lake.

North and South Higgins Lake
General Management Plans
Page 2
March 29, 2018

The DNR uses general management plans (GMPs) to define a long-range planning and management strategy that will protect the natural and cultural resources of the site, while considering recreation and education opportunities. A planning team, representing various specialties within the DNR, has been established and is meeting regularly to develop the GMPs for these sites.

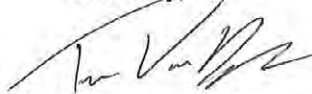
The planning process includes several opportunities for input to help guide the plan. An on-line survey for each park is currently available by following a link on the North and South Higgins Lake State Park webpages at www.michigan.gov/southhiggins and www.michigan.gov/northhiggins. A stakeholder focus group meeting has been scheduled for April 24, 2018, at the Main Branch room of the Education Building at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center, 104 Conservation Drive, Roscommon, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. In addition, the draft plan will be available for review and comment via the department's website and an open public meeting prior to adoption later this year.

For additional information on our management plan process, please visit our website at www.michigan.gov/parkmanagementplans

We would like to give the Tribes the opportunity to meet with us independently of the larger group to discuss the management plan process and any thoughts you may have in relation North and/or South Higgins Lake State Parks. In addition, you are welcome to send representatives to the stakeholder focus group meetings, or the public meetings, which will be advertised later this year.

Please contact Ms. Debbie Jensen, PRD Management Plan Administrator at 517-284-6105, or myself if you have any questions or would like to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely,



Trevor VanDyke
Tribal Coordinator
517-284-6237

cc. Ms. Debbie Jensen
Mr. William Doan
Ms. Rachel Roberts
Mr. Josh Pellow

B.6 Summary of Draft Plan Public Input

The public was invited to share their thoughts about the North Higgins Lake State Park Draft General Management Plan at a public meeting that was hosted by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on September 24th, 2018, from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center in Roscommon, Michigan. This meeting held jointly with the North Higgins Lake State Park General Management Plan process as the interested parties would have considerable overlap. The general public was notified about the meeting through a press release, internet postings, and email notifications. A total of 35 attendees were recorded on sign-in sheets. The majority of the meeting attendees were members of an interest group concerned with the water quality of Higgins Lake and did not necessarily represent the interests of all park users. Many attendees were interested in discussing water quality concerns in lieu of the breadth of topics covered in the draft general management plan.

The meeting began with a brief introduction of planning team members, followed by a short overview of the general management plan process, North Higgins Lake State Park, and its draft General Management Plan contents. The presentation was followed by a short question and answer period. One question related to the purpose of the general management plan, and then many questions and comments related to the DNR's approach to aquatic invasive species in Higgins Lake. After the question and answer period, attendees were asked to review the presentation boards that included the following excerpts of the draft General Management Plan: statements of significance, management zone plan, and ten-year actions goals.

Participants were presented with several optional methods to express their comments, thoughts, and opinions. These methods included "sticky notes" for affixing comments directly onto the presentation boards, stickers for prioritizing their top action goals, and a comment sheet that included six questions pertaining to the draft General Management Plan contents. Two copies of the complete draft General Management Plan were available to attendees during the meeting for review and attendees were also advised of the project website, <http://mdnrmanagement-plans.org/south-higgins-lake>, where they could access the draft plan at their leisure and submit comments via e-mail. Online commenting was available until October 5th. Most attendees used the sticky note method of commenting as well as the comment sheet and email comments. Most email comments related to controlling invasive species in Higgins Lake through prevention and mitigation.

Participants used six stickers to prioritize their top action goals from the ten-year action goals list. Some of the top voted action goals included items related to preventing, detecting, and controlling invasive species; continuing to monitor for Oak Wilt and other forest pests, maintaining the historic Concession Building, and maintaining the Marl Lake boardwalk. Below is a list of all action goals, their number of votes, and all sticky note comments that attendees wrote. These items, along with other input from the public, will be considered as the planning team finalizes the General Management Plan.



The draft plan is presented to attendees



Attendees and planning team members discuss the plan

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

PUBLIC INPUT MEETING ATTENDEES

Name
James Bates
Suzanne Bates
Mariah Frye
Lauren Lutz
Mark Lutz
Patti Haight
Randon Haight
Bill Baker
Karen Ehinger
Herb Weatherly
Greg Douglas
Anne Meeks
Connie Price
Nancy Perry
Mark Atherholt
Matt Salesky
Dianna Wagner
Vicki Springstead
Marlene Cohen
Kenneth Dennings
Rick Meeks
Wayne Brooks
Greg Semack
Barb Costello
Charlene Cornell
Mike Briggs
Jane Case
William Case
Mary Hall
Dave Hall
Wayne Hall
Nick Erusberger
John Ogren
Tony Barnard
Leonard Calbert

STAFF ATTENDEES

Name	Representing
Debbie Jensen	DNR-PRD
William Doan	DNR-PRD
Ray Fahlsing	DNR-PRD
Josh Pellow	DNR-PRD
Hillary Pine	DNR-History Center
Lisa Gamero	DNR-PRD
Amy Swainston	DNR-PRD
Brandon Kieft	DNR-LED
Rachel Roberts	DNR-PRD
Christy Summers	Beckett & Raeder, Inc.
Caitlin Jackson	Beckett & Raeder, Inc.

SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENTS

Outdoor Recreation Destination

South Higgins Lake State Park is located on the shores of Higgins Lake in an area that has been enjoyed as a resort destination since the 1870s. The lake and surrounding area are renowned for stunning natural beauty, easy accessibility from two interstate highways, and a wealth of family-friendly recreation opportunities, including abundant nearby state forest land.

Diverse Water Recreation Opportunities

South Higgins Lake State Park has an array of water recreation offerings with access on both Higgins Lake and Marl Lake. The large size and deep spring-fed water of Higgins Lake is popular for fishing and recreational boating. In contrast, Marl Lake's shallow and calm waters provide a quiet, natural setting for non-motorized and electric motor boats. The Cut River connects the two lakes, creating an interesting paddling experience. Nearly a mile of shoreline on Higgins Lake within the park includes four designated swimming beaches and two pet-friendly areas by the water.

Boating Amenities

The heavily-used boat launch on Higgins Lake, with 180 trailer parking spaces and a reservable shelter, features a protected boating access site known as the boat basin, unusual for an inland lake. Temporary mooring is available to campers for the duration of their stay, as well as to day users. A boat wash is available to boaters to help protect the lake ecosystem against the spread of invasive species. The park store rents stand-up paddle boards, canoes, kayaks, and pontoon boats to visitors.

Large Campground with Modern Amenities

The 400-site campground at South Higgins Lake State Park is the second largest in the Michigan state park system. It includes traditional sites, a limited number of full hook-up sites, and a mini-cabin. Due to the number of campsites in close proximity, large groups can enjoy camping together within a traditional campground setting.

Modern and Historic

As one of the oldest state parks in Michigan, South Higgins Lake State Park has provided visitors with a quintessential northern Michigan experience since 1927. The park concession building, constructed in 1935, is still in use today as a large park general store with an attached pavilion available for daily rentals. It has retained enough historic integrity to be considered a historic structure by the DNR. The concession building and the park have seen many upgrades, including new restroom and shower buildings at the campground, providing present-day visitors with modern camping amenities.

Diverse Programing and Events

Diverse and abundant programs and events occur throughout the summer and fall months, such as the Explorer Guide Program and Halloween Fest. Collaboration with community groups allows for an ever-changing selection of programs in South Higgins Lake State Park. These programs and events provide activities for campers as well as attracting visitors to the park.

Park Trails

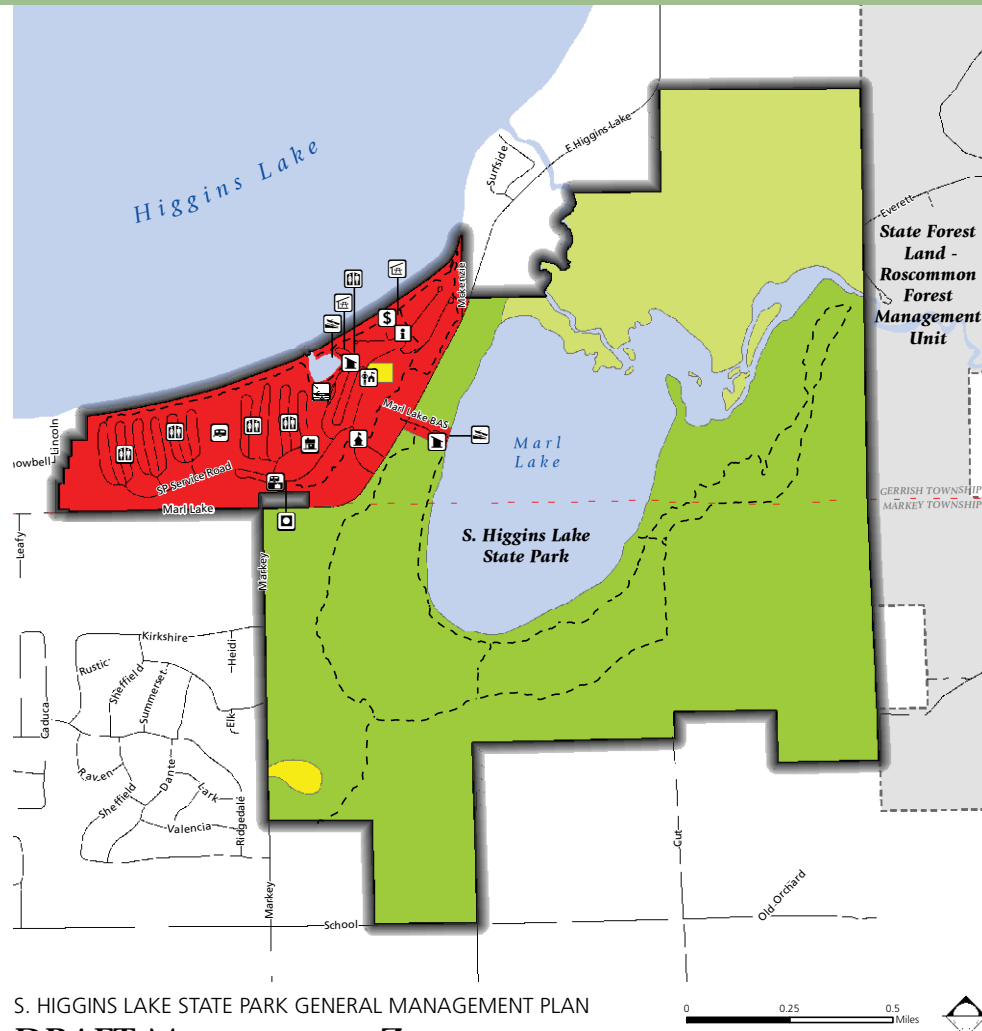
The addition in 1984 of nearly 700 acres of forested land surrounding Marl Lake provided an opportunity for 5.5 miles of primitive hiking/cross-country ski trails, which now link to the Markey Township park. These low-impact trails contrast with the heavily-used trails north of County Road 100 that run along the shoreline and connect the various facilities within the park, with the potential for long-term regional connectivity.

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENTS COMMENTS

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT	COMMENT
Diverse Water Recreation Opportunities	Work to control erosion on Higgins Lake. Legal level is too high. (See HIA report)
Boating Amenities	Clean lagoon or close it!
Boating Amenities	Define and limit "Temporary" mooring
Boating Amenities	Do not dredge the basin. Let it fill in to limit size of boats.
Boating Amenities	Make boat washing mandatory now
Large Campground with Modern Amenities	Discourage drinking, noise, partying. Enforce rules.

SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK

DRAFT MANAGEMENT ZONE MAP



S. HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

DRAFT Management Zones

Data Sources: Michigan C-GI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Date: 8/1/2018

- S. Higgins Lake State Park Boundary
- Trails

Management Zones:

- Administrative Services
- Primitive
- Backcountry
- Developed Recreation

- \$ Concession/Store
- A Contact Station
- H Headquarters
- I Informational
- M Mini Cabin
- P Pavilion
- B Boat Wash

- R Registration Station
- S Sanitation Station
- T Toilet / Shower
- V Vault Toilet
- C Campground
- L Boat Launch
- P Pavilion

B R R
Beckett&Raeder





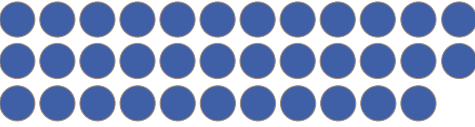
MANAGEMENT ZONE	COMMENT
Primitive Zone	26 acres Under Land Conservancy. Primitive access

SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK

TEN-YEAR ACTION GOALS

The following 10-year action goals are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as well as ease of implementation (cost, ability to implement with own staff, partnerships etc.). Priority Level 1 projects indicate those that should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2 projects include those that should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired, but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years, once funding has been identified. The bolded party within the Program Input column is the responsible program position.

MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

ACTION GOALS	PRIORITY	VOTES
Continue to coordinate with local townships to create trail connections in the region as opportunities arise	Ongoing	
Continue to monitor for Oak Wilt and other forest pests	Ongoing	
Continue to explore options for the addition of Wi-Fi to the campground	Ongoing	
Continue to explore land acquisition of properties within the GMP Proposed Project Boundary	Ongoing	
Continue to work proactively with partners to develop and implement measures to prevent, detect and control aquatic and terrestrial invasive species	Ongoing	
Complete a Natural Resources Stewardship Plan for the park, identifying targets for conservation and related natural resource management strategies	1	
Complete MiFi forest inventory mapping for the park	1	
Explore opportunities to work with partners or secure grants to design and develop a new playground in the day-use area	2	

SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK

TEN-YEAR ACTION GOALS

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: CAPITAL OUTLAY

The following 10-year action goals are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as well as ease of implementation (cost, ability to implement with own staff, partnerships etc.). Priority Level 1 projects indicate those that should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2 projects include those that should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired, but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years, once funding has been identified. The bolded party within the Program Input column is the responsible program position.

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: CAPITAL OUTLAY

ACTION GOALS	PRIORITY	VOTES
Complete an engineering study of the Concession Building	1	●
Replace the roof of the Concession Building considering the historic integrity	1	●●
Complete the paved regional trail connector through the park	2	
Facilitate boat camping by implementing electrical pedestals and docks at the boat basin	2	●
Construct modern cabins near the ballfield utilizing existing underground utilities	3	
Construct a shelter at the ballfield for program use and rental	3	
Construct a universally accessible fishing pier and canoe/kayak launch at Marl Lake	3	●●●




SOUTH HIGGINS LAKE STATE PARK

TEN-YEAR ACTION GOALS

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: SMALL PROJECTS

The following 10-year action goals are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as well as ease of implementation (cost, ability to implement with own staff, partnerships etc.). Priority Level 1 projects indicate those that should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2 projects include those that should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired, but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years, once funding has been identified. The bolded party within the Program Input column is the responsible program position.

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: SMALL PROJECTS

ACTION GOALS	PRIORITY	VOTES
Improve the accessibility of the beach area by implementing an accessible route to the Higgins Lake water's edge	1	
Maintain existing boardwalk and construct additional boardwalk segments along the Marl Lake trails to protect the natural resources	1	
Maintain the historic Concession Building by repairing and replacing logs as needed	1	
Repair existing day docks	1	
Construct a basketball court in the day-use area	2	

ACTION GOALS COMMENTS	
ACTION GOAL	COMMENT
Continue to work proactively with partners to develop and implement measures to prevent, detect and control aquatic and terrestrial invasive species	More leadership for DNR in solving aquatic invasive species (AIS) issues.
	Close the lagoon until Starry Stonewort is removed.
	Take responsibility for bringing invasive species to our lake by your launch sites.
	Close lagoon, clean it up.
	I'd like you to add clean up of starry stonewort (SSW) + Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) in lagoon. Close it until then.
	Continue 2018 Program - employees at boat wash - education.
	Clean up your mess!
	Close + clean the lagoon.
	Please be the leader on immediately stopping the spread of Starry Stonewort.
	Immediate action on invasive species already detected! SSW, EWM – Close lagoon!
	Close the south park boat launch at once. show a sense of urgency.
	Clean and manage boat access sites must be priority #1!
	Your plan does not indicate action! We need something done now!
	Park improvement & enhancement objectives need to be subordinate to protecting the resource around which the amenities exist and upon which they depend.
Replace the roof of the Concession Building considering the historic integrity	Historical integrity must be priority in choice of roof.
Facilitate boat camping by implementing electrical pedestals and docks at the boat basin	No docks with electric. only brings bigger great lake boats
	Boat camping in the lagoon is a bad idea! Boat camping is a bad idea on Higgins Lake...period.
	Do not encourage overnight boating by building docks.
Construct a basketball court in the day-use area	Why do we even need a basketball court at all.
(None)	Require mandatory boat wash.

COMMENT SHEET RESPONSES

1) DO YOU AGREE WITH THE PARK SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENTS? WOULD YOU ADD OR CHANGE ANYTHING TO THE STATEMENTS?

Prioritize lake health and sustainability.

We will need additional emphasis on water invasive species.

Yes (2 responses)

2) DO YOU AGREE WITH THE DRAFT MANAGEMENT ZONES? IF NOT, WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

Too many zones, need more focus on big issues

No! Emphasize less boat use on the lake, not more.

Do not expand anything – DNR is already overgrown so cannot manage launches they have.

Yes (3 responses)

3) ARE THERE ANY ADDITIONAL ACTION GOALS YOU WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE?

Boat access, mandatory boat wash.

Lake health is paramount. Use of boat launches in S. Park cannot sustain health of lake.

No overnight boating being occupied.

Please put as top priority an action now of preventing the spread of SSW.

Mandatory boat washing.

1) Close the south park lagoon - eliminate all invasive species.

2) Eliminate SSW at West launch and in south park canal.

3) Eliminate SSW at 3 other known sites.

4) Monitor lakes next year for additional cultures.

Mandate washing boats going into the lake & out.

4) ARE THERE ANY PROPOSED ACTION GOALS YOU DON'T THINK SHOULD BE INCLUDED? IF SO, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

Lot of insignificant initiatives.

A healthy lake is a happy lake.

Don't allow boat camping. Get a handle on rowdies at SSP.

Fishing pier at Marl Lake.

5) OTHER COMMENTS:

Get priorities in line with DNR purpose.

Mandatory boat wash, please.

Additional marine patrol needed to enforce marine laws, drunken boating, speed limit, noise, public urination, loud music, riparian trespass, etc.

It was hard to hear the staff answer questions standing in the back of the audience. There should be a microphone.

I feel the paving of the Trailway is an absolute must & urgent goal for the safety of all users, local & statewide. This is the last portion of the Higgins Lake /Roscommon Non-Motorized Trailway path & an integral part to complete so we can mark the Trailway – without this portion paved, we feel it is too dangerous of a corner to direct people to the Trailway currently.

Charge \$\$ for each launch – use the \$\$ to pay for prevention & remediation of invasive species.

CLOSE + CLEAN THE LAGOON
OF STONEY STONEWART

ditto! NOW

Please, prioritize the
Cleanliness of S. Higgins
Park Lagoon! No overnight Docking!

Humans are an invasive species.
Limit the # & size of boats allowed thru
the park. The culture of the SSP is
changing. It's become the gathering place
for loud partiers & obnoxious behavior.

Online Comment 1 Received 09/25/2018

Good Morning,

Thank You for the information at last evenings meeting.

I had to leave early because of an important Rotary meeting that started at 6pm as well.

First, I was embarrassed by the bombardment the DNR received regarding the evasive species comments, while yes, I agree with a lot of what they were saying, but I realize that it is only a portion of your Management Plan and you should have been given the respect to finish your presentation!

Here are my comment sheets, and if you were ever able to get to the dots (I left at 7:10 when I saw they were going to keep hounding on the one topic for a long time) all my dots would have been on the South State Park paving of the Trailway as MOST important goal to complete asap!

Please keep us informed as to the plan and forecast for completion.

Online Comment 1 Received 10/01/2018

The DNR has not been responsible in how they allow launching of boats at their launch sites, taking little care to protect our lake from Invasive species being brought in as hitchhikers from other lakes. We now have a new invasive species, Starry Stonewort that has recently been identified in our lake and many signs point to the DNR launch sites as to where the Starry Stonewort was introduced. We are asking the DNR to clean up the South Park lagoon and the other places known to us in order to eliminate the Starry Stonewort and stop their launch sites from spreading it throughout the lake. We also feel that mandatory boat washing is one of the best tools to protect our lake from future such invasions. The DNR has been resistant to helping us. We need you to act with urgency to stop the spread of Starry Stonewort and also have mandatory boat washing at all DNR launch sites in the future.

Online Comment 3 Received 10/01/2018

Ms. Jensen: I tend to support the HLPOA with regard to the removal of the SSW from Higgins Lake. It is far easier to remove the small amount present right now rather than wait until it devours the entire lake. I recommend immediate and swift action to remove the starry stonewort. As I see it, the DNR is responsible for its very presence owing to the multiple boat launches around the lake provided by the DNR. Also, as I see it, without the removal of SSW, there will be a large tendency for folks not to use the lake, and this immediately impacts the local economy.

rlmckellar@msh-iplaw.com

Online Comment 4 Received 10/01/2018

Hi Deborah,

I send you this as a concerned property owner at Higgins Lake.

I strongly urge the DNR to enforce more strongly the launch sites that now have brought another invasive species to our Lake.

The evidence of the infestation is overwhelming.

Monies were spent to build boat washing facilities on the North and South sides of the lake.

Let's make it mandatory in order to launch a boat and stop this from recurring...

We also need to clean up the South State Park Lagoon which is now loaded with Starry Stonewort ...and spreading...

Online Comment 5 Received 10/01/2018

We now have Starry Stonewort in our Higgins Lake. Since the areas that are affected are the DNR launch sites, it is apparent that the DNR has provided the access for this invasion. I am asking that you shut down these sites until you can remove the threat. The “experts” have said once this weed gets a good start there is no way to stop it, so something needs to be done now!

Online Comment 6 Received 10/01/2018

I am a homeowner on Higgins Lake and have become aware that our boat access sites have become infected with a new invasive species- Starry Stonewort. Boats entering the lake from these sites drag this environmentally dangerous plant into the rest of the lake.

When will the DNR take responsibility for this and clean it up before it is too late? And when will the DNR protect the lake from further infestation by requiring all boats to be washed before entering the lake?

The DNR has previously stated this is a “complicated” matter. What is so complicated about cleaning this up and preventing boats from introducing additional invasive species to the lake?

You have asked for comments on your plan so please take these under consideration for inclusion in you plan.

Online Comment 7 Received 10/01/2018

Dear Deborah-

My family have been either vacationing or owned on Higgins Lake for close to 85 years and I hope my children will continue. I am 66 and have experienced a lake with more and more water issues. I'd like to think the DNR puts lakes and their water quality first.

Over the years the DNR has become more involved in providing boat access to the lake. With your assistance to these boat owners comes the responsible to ensure no damage the lake's water quality. Please own up to your responsibility and clean up the boat access sites.

Online Comment 8 Received 10/01/2018

Ms. Jensen,

The DNR must act to stop the spread of Starry Stonewort, and the introduction of other invasive species at Higgins Lake. The DNR is responsible for the clean up of Starry Stonewort at their launch sites. Mandatory boat washing must be enforced at all access sites on Higgins Lake. Any launch sites that are not equipped with a wash station, and staff to enforce, must be shut down/deemed illegally to launch from. This includes the unregulated boat launching at road ends. The health of Higgins Lake is in your hands!

Online Comment 9 Received 10/01/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen

The purpose of this email is to express my grave concerns regarding the manner in which the MDNR is operating the state parks referenced above.

A little background is, I believe, in order so that you may judge the credibility of my comments. I am a life long resident of Higgins Lake. My mother and father established a resort on Higgins Lake in 1946. I was born at the resort in 1955. I have lived at Higgins Lake continuously since my birth. It is not inaccurate to say that Higgins Lake helped put me (and three siblings) through college and graduate school.

I have practiced law since 1980 and specialize in environmental legal issues. I have represented the Higgins Lake Property Owners Association for at least 30 years. The HLPOA has been a strident advocate in the environmental protection of Higgins Lake.

Higgins Lake has suffered with the invasion of zebra mussels and milfoil. Both of these aquatic invasive species were introduced into the lake through the careless and thoughtless launching of infected watercraft. Accordingly, in the last ten years, the HLPOA has made it a priority to work with the local state park managers, and their supervisors, to prevent the launching of watercraft into Higgins Lake without first having the watercraft inspected, and when necessary, washed. Notwithstanding these efforts, the North State Park and South State Park have clearly not prioritized their efforts to preclude the introduction of yet another AIS into the lake.

This August past, HLPOA sadly discovered that Starry Stonewort, a most destructive AIS, has now “found” its way into Higgins Lake. It seems scientifically obvious that the boat basin at the South State Park is at least one major point of introduction. The introduction of Starry Stonewort is a crushing blow for all who love Higgins Lake.

Amazingly, HLPOA has now learned that when management at both of Higgins Lake’s state parks drafted their 2018 multi-year management plans, they have barely considered devoting a portion of the plans toward combatting the spread of Starry Stonewort. Nor has management given real thought to preventing the introduction of the “next “ AIS to hit Michigan’s waters.

The thought process of improving the park systems at Higgins Lake needs to be substantially reorganized. Without a pristine lake, the state parks will become footnotes in history because no one will care to use them. Let’s do what is right. Put the protection of the lake first, not last, on the state park priority list.

Online Comment 10 Received 10/01/2018

Deborah,

Just writing to support the DNR parks on Higgins Lake for boat cleaning to reduce invasives coming into the lake. Currently there are no boat washing requirements. Also, many people are launching boats with extremely large engines (noisy and super fast). Some control on the HP and noise would be nice. Regarding the invasives, we would like the newest invasive (Starry Stonewort) removed from the lake before it becomes too big a problem (like zebra mussels). Any help is appreciated.

Online Comment 11 Received 10/01/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen,

Invasive species control is important in the preservation of Michigan’s beautiful lakes and waterways so vital to Michigan’s economy and to the quality of life the people of Michigan deserve. It seems so logical to me that the DNR spend its money up front by requiring boat wash stations at all of its park ramps. At Higgins Lake in particular, the launch area and man made lagoon need to be completely cleaned of the species that are growing there so that they are not transported into the lake wrapped in boat propellers. Up front, preventive measures are always less expensive than clean up measures that are required when lakes are infested with invasive species.

It is past time for preventive action to be taken in this regard. Our Michigan lakes are our greatest resource and must be protected.

Online Comment 12 Received 10/01/2018

I would like to express my concern about the introduction of invasive species into Higgins Lake through the DNR launches, particularly at the South State Park as well as your other boat launches. I understand that Starry Stonewort has now made its way into our lake. These invasive species have and will dramatically alter the ecosystem of Higgins Lake. As numerous other states have done, I urge the DNR to make boat washes mandatory before boats from other bodies of water are launched into Higgins and all Michigan lakes.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. I trust the DNR will take its stewardship of Higgins Lake and all the inland lakes in Michigan seriously and enact this policy.

Online Comment 13 Received 10/01/2018

As a seasonal resident of Higgins Lake for over 50 years, I am heartbroken over the invasive species that have taking over our beautiful waters.

Please, please do what you can to help protect Higgins Lake from further issues, seemingly brought in via launch sites.

Online Comment 14 Received 10/01/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen: Please help preserve our beautiful Lake. We request that the DNR help us preserve this natural beauty by urgently helping to stop the spread of Starry Stonewort invasive species and by having mandatory boat washing at all DNR launch sites. Thank you.

Online Comment 15 Received 10/01/2018

Mandatory boat washing is a MUST. I can't believe that the DNR opposes this incredibly simple yet necessary action to protect our beautiful Highins. Thank you for your efforts.

Online Comment 16 Received 10/01/2018

Dear Deborah, As a property owner and member of a family that has been enjoying and supporting conservation practices on Higgins Lake for 5 generations I believe the least we should require is thorough boat washing at every launch site. There are potentially numerous invasive species that are yet to be revealed.

Online Comment 17 Received 10/01/2018

Hi Deborah, I am but one of many riparian owners at Higgins Lake that have grown weary of this beautiful natural resource that the DNR has allowed to come under attack from invasive aquatic species. The fix was simple but would have been met by an outcry from the general population...no access to any lake unless your watercraft has been certified washed and bilge areas emptied. This should be true for any lake in Michigan. But, rather, than upset the general population, those that have a vested interest in Higgins Lake must pay for the DNR's lack of intestinal fortitude. The DNR is allowing our lake among many others in the state to be destroyed. What can be done to save the lakes? Maybe it's too late? I know one thing for certain if the DNR continues allowing watercraft carrying invasive species to travel from lake to lake unchecked we will lose this battle, the lakes themselves, and the tax base that the state so desperately needs. So what is the DNR going to do? Perhaps there will be movement from ineptitude to action. It's our only hope!

Online Comment 18 Received 10/01/2018

My name is Alvan Carr and my family celebrated 100 years at Higgins lake this past summer. Over the years I have seen the lake deteriorate (milfoil, zebra mussels, swimmers itch etc.) I think most of the blame goes to the DNR for not inspecting the boats entering the state parks. I have contributed over \$50,000 to try and correct the problems created by the DNR. Now we have Starry Stonewort. I think I should give up, I can't keep up with the short sightedness of the DNR. Does it bother you that your organization is destroying one of Michigan's jewels. Inspection and boat washes, that is how other states protect their lakes.

APPENDIX B

Online Comment 19 Received 10/01/2018

Please institute mandatory boat washing at DNR sites, now at Higgins Lake, and expanded state wide in the future. I feel this is the best program for stopping invasive species, like the recently discovered Starry Stonewort, being introduced to our Michigan lakes. The program must be mandatory, routing boats thru washes, staffed with trained personal, to insure proper washing. Possibly lake organizations, like HLF and HLPOA could support this effort.

Online Comment 20 Received 10/01/2018

Greetings!

My name is Mark Hancock and I am a resident at Higgins Lake. We are blessed to have this beautiful resource, but to save it for future generations, we must be good stewards!

I won't go on and on, but I am quite dismayed by the perceived lack of concern coming from your agency. We are all aware of the impact of invasive species on our lakes. I would expect your agency to partner with various lake associations in the State to address these issues! I certainly hope there will be more cooperation in the future!

Online Comment 21 Received 10/01/2018

Yes, I believe the DNR should be leading the charge to ensure that ALL invasive species DO NOT enter Higgins Lake. Please do what you need to do up to and including mandatory boat washes, etc.

I can't believe I need to email this note.

Online Comment 22 Received 10/01/2018

Ms. Jensen,

I write to request your help in protecting Higgins Lake from the further spread or introduction of invasive species.

My family has owned property on Higgins Lake for 20+ years, and before that, we camped the State Parks beginning in the 1970's. We feel a great sense of stewardship toward this beautiful lake and we are committed to protecting it for generations to come: we maintain a natural shoreline, we participate in clean-up events, we are quiet and respectful boaters, we are considerate of our neighbors and wildlife, and we do our best to promote the lake as a family destination.

Over the past few years, we've dealt with various threats to our lake, including: Eurasian Milfoil, Zebra Mussels, Lake Itch, and now Starry Stonewort. Each time, we have witnessed negative impact on local tourism, on area businesses, on property values (and tax base), and most importantly, to the aquatic species native to our lake. Each time, we have had to band together as homeowners and bear the burden and expense to address these problems. Three of these problems were avoidable-- caused by the careless and unmonitored introduction of aggressive non-native species into our lake -- likely via an unwashed boat or PWC at one of the state-run boat launches.

It's troublesome to us that any watercraft may enter the lake each day without any effort to verify it is mechanically sound (not leaking gas or oil), and that it has been properly washed clean of invasive species. Also, there seems to be no effort to control the quantity of boats that you permit to enter the lake, which raises safety, noise and pollution concerns. THIS MUST CHANGE!

I urge the DNR to require mandatory boat washes at every Higgins Lake launch and to monitor the quality and quantity of boats you permit to enter the lake. And, until such time as these controls are instituted, it only makes sense to temporarily restrict launches at all state-controlled sites.

I would appreciate a response that identifies the DNR's specific plan of action and timeline. If you think this matter requires further study, then I would ask you to first review the aerial photographs that provide clear proof of this problem and its source.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at the numbers or addresses listed below. I look forward to your response!

Online Comment 23 Received 10/01/2018

We who own lake property as well as all users of Higgins Lake need the State to step up efforts to protect the clarity and overall health of this great Michigan resource! In my 40 years on Higgins I have already seen the quality of the lake deteriorate. With the two State Parks and multiple launches the DNR needs to quickly step up their overall vigilance to protect the lake and the entire watershed.

The economy of the entire area is totally dependent upon the health of Higgins Lake.

Online Comment 24 Received 10/01/2018

I am a long time owner of property on Higgins Lake. I am concerned about the discovery of another invasive species on Higgins Lake. Since we have boat washes available it seems that they should be made mandatory to all boaters.

Online Comment 25 Received 10/01/2018

HLPOA has requested that we inform you of our concern for the invasive species which is now invading our lake. HLPOA has spent many time and money in fighting other invasive species with perhaps no help from the DNR. Now is the time to fight this new species and with your help it can be accomplished. Whether the DNR has helped in the past or not it is important to assist now in cleaning up the South Park lagoon and other places on the lake before Starry Stonewort takes over.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Online Comment 26 Received 10/01/2018

The south state park lagoon is disgraceful. Aerial photos show the trail of invasive plants species leading out of the boat passageway. Starry Stonewort is now in the lake. Please help protect this Michigan gem before we pass the point of no return. Thank you. Earl Townsend, a property owner on the lake who has gone there for 55 years of my 61 on earth

Online Comment 27 Received 10/01/2018

where this problem is of such a magnitude that our state reputation for clean lakes is going to drop quickly!!!

Online Comment 28 Received 10/01/2018

We own a home on Higgins Lake and have seen that another invasive species has been found in the lake. Please enforce the laws that require all boats be washed prior to being put in the lake. I am looking into volunteering in the clean boats clean waters program. I would like to help. We believe that people are mostly lazy not deliberately introducing invasive species into the lake. Please help protect such a beautiful lake.

Online Comment 29 Received 10/01/2018

Please support the protocols such as boat washing to preserve the beauty of Higgins Lake.

Online Comment 30 Received 10/01/2018

Hello,

This email is asking the DNR to please act urgently and help prevent the spread and further invasion of Starry Stonewort in Higgins Lake. Also, please enforce boat washes at all state parks on Higgins Lake.

Online Comment 31 Received 10/01/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen,

I am a member of the Higgins Lake Property Owners Association (HLPOA) and live on the southeast portion of Higgins Lake, near the South Higgins Lake State Park. I understand that the Department of Natural Resources is considering improvements to its parks on Higgins Lake. While I appreciate the concept of improving parks and the experience of lake users, any improvements should include consideration of the potential impacts of the users of DNR parks on Higgins Lake water quality.

An August 2018 draft study by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, Water Resources Division, contains results from an aquatic invasive species early detection surveillance for Higgins Lake. Dense patches of the invasive species, starry stonewort, were detected near the south and west boat launches. The South and North Higgins Lake State Parks currently have boat washes available to boaters and signage to encourage use of the washes to prevent introduction or the spread of invasive species. My understanding is that some of the DNR launches on Higgins Lake have no boat wash facilities and nothing at these sites to educate users about boat washing and invasive species. With starry stonewort already present at the west boat launch, it appears likely that it was introduced to this location by launching a boat that had starry stonewort present. We know that boat washing can be an effective method to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species in inland lakes. Mandatory boat washing at all DNR boat launch sites could greatly reduce the potential impact of invasive species on Higgins Lake water quality.

In the DNR's process for improving parks on Higgins Lake, I am hoping that DNR will consider the following before improving their parks.

1. What is the amount of use currently at the boat launch facilities maintained by DNR?
2. What has been the effect on the water quality in the area of the boat launches (oil, gas, trash, invasive species, etc.)
3. What improvements are currently planned for the parks and boat launch locations?
4. What issues will DNR address in the improvements to the boat launches? This should be based on the understanding of the current impacts of the boat launch users on the water quality.
5. How will DNR work with the park users to prevent the introduction of invasive species into Higgins Lake? This falls within DNR's protect and preserve natural resources responsibilities.
6. What will be added to the parks to address water quality issues, including invasive species?
7. What are the planned improvements, schedule and budget for park improvements?
8. Will there be a public review of the work plan before commencing improvements? This would be a good opportunity for collaboration among lake residents and the DNR to determine a workable solution to address potential impacts from the public accessing the lake from DNR parks.

I am sorry I was unable to attend the September 24th meeting and hope that there will be something available on DNR's website that can bring me up to date on progress with the planned improvements. Thanks for any information you can share with me. I appreciate your consideration of my concerns, and I look forward to working with the DNR to protect and preserve Higgins Lake while providing public access.

Online Comment 32 Received 10/01/2018

Dear Ms Jensen,

We have owned our wonderful cottage on the lake for more than 40 years. The lake has always been pristine. In recent past we have struggled with swimmers itch and now Starry Stonewort.

We acknowledge that our public launch sites offer the opportunity for many non residents and residents alike to enjoy what we have had the privilege for many years.

We just want to make sure that they are launching Clean Water vessels.

Please establish the practice of washing all boats prior to launch. Please make this mandatory and enforce the law.

The South Park has a lot of transient vessels. It seems that special attention should be addressed to this location also.

We would love to be able to ensure that Higgins Lake remain one of the most beautiful bodies of water in the country. Our children and all of the generations that will follow look forward to enjoying the lake forever without invasive species.

Online Comment 33 Received 10/01/2018

As Higgins Lake property owners, we believe that mandatory washing of boats prior to launching will help in the prevention of invasive weeds and aquatic life entering our lake. Since most out of area boats enter the lake at DNR launch sites, those are the critical areas where boat washing should be mandatory and monitored.

We would also support closing non DNR ramps if this would help in solving the problem.

Please help keep Higgins Lake pristine.

Online Comment 34 Received 10/01/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen,

I implore you to help keep Higgins Lake safe from all these invasive species, like starry stonewort that boats are bringing into our beautiful, fish loving lake. The DNR must help clean up the South Park Lagoon, and help prevent more invasive species from coming in to Higgins Lake.

My husband and I take much delight in kayaking and paddle boarding near our property on the lake, and especially love seeing all the different type of fish in our wonderful lake. It would be a travesty to see the lake's quality diminish.

Online Comment 35 Received 10/01/2018

Dear DNR,

I am a lakefront property owner at Higgins Lake and request that the Michigan DNR invest some interest, time and money into the invasive species problem we now have at our VERY ACTIVE lake.

We are the ONLY lake in Michigan with two state parks and have huge attendance at each park. Because the boat washes are not presently mandatory, we have invasive plants being dragged into our lake. We have airborne photos of the damage already occurring at the South State Park.

I feel the protection of this valuable lake is YOUR responsibility and we need an uptake in your involvement before it's too late.

Online Comment 36 Received 10/04/2018

Folks, you need to enforce mandatory boat washing at boat ramp at Higgins lake.

Please stop this invasive species

Native Range: Europe and western Asia

U.S. Distribution: Michigan, northern Indiana, southeastern Wisconsin, Minnesota, and the northeast United States

Local Concern: Starry stonewort forms dense mats in lakes and can significantly reduce the diversity of other aquatic plants. Dense mats of vegetation can also impede movement of fish, spawning activity, water flow, and recreational activities.

Online Comment 37 Received 10/05/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen,

As a resident of Higgins Lake, I read with interest the management plans for both the north and south state parks at Higgins Lake. I also attended the public input meeting on Sept. 24, 2018.

I would like to commend you and your staff for the considerable effort that went into preparing these plans and for the opportunity to allow citizens to voice their opinions.

As you could tell at the meeting, area residents and visitors are passionate about protecting Higgins Lake. We long-time residents (and for many of us, the generations of family members before us) have witnessed firsthand the deterioration of Higgins Lake. My husband and I- and many in attendance at the meeting- have volunteered countless hours over decades doing water testing, AIS education and eradication, serving on boards, attending meetings, and approaching local units of government for help with ordinances to address issues such as septic tank maintenance, boat noise levels, AIS control, greenbelt incentives, fireworks enforcement, etc.

We have also generously donated to the Higgins Lake Foundation which paid for the boat washes on Higgins Lake, bought the DASH boat to control EWM and now Starry Stonewort, and pays for the operation of the boat throughout the summer. (It was sad to note at the meeting that when asked who was partnering with the DNR on Higgins Lake, not a single DNR employee mentioned the HLF.)

Obviously, the control of AIS is paramount for the health of Higgins Lake, and a pilot Mandatory Boat Wash program should be put in place for the 2019 boating season. Collaborative meetings do nothing to address the problem at hand.

In addition, when looking at a ten-to-twenty year plan, it is necessary to acknowledge the changing fabric of our society. Higgins Lake, like most wild and wonderful places, used to attract those who love the outdoors. More and more it is attracting people looking to hook up with others who just want to party. The South State Park is notorious for this. The comments from people who took the online survey reflect this. Many said it was no longer a place to bring a family. Others noted that the crowds, noise, drunkenness, lewd behavior, obscene music, jet ski speeds, public urination and boat noise were out of control.

Between the two state parks on Higgins Lake, nearly 423,000 people visit Higgins Lake in a year. We are being invaded by both aquatic and human species. Something has to be done to mitigate their impact.

Thank you for your time, and good luck in your future endeavors to protect Higgins Lake,

Online Comment 38 Received 10/05/2018

Hello. Please accept this as a request for DNR to clean up the lagoon, the channel and West launch of aquatic invasives at Higgins Lake in Roscommon County. We really need your help on this. Thank you.

Online Comment 39 Received 10/05/2018

I heard that you will be making changes to the two Higgins Lake state parks. I believe that the changes should include mandatory boat washings prior to launching a boat into Higgins Lake. This would greatly improve/reduce the invasive species which are entering the lake and ruining the environment. Please make this a requirement for launching boats and a top priority for improving the State Parks.

Online Comment 40 Received 10/05/2018

Dear Deborah Jensen,

I hope this finds you well. I just wanted to write to add my voice to those encouraging the DNR to keep Higgins Lake as free from invasives as possible-- in particular, by cleaning up the launches, especially Starry Stonewort. My family has had property on the lake since the late 19th century. We love it more than we can say. It is truly my heart's home. In my lifetime, I've seen the arrival of several invasive species, which have totally transformed the lake's ecosystem. It's still the most beautiful lake in the world to me, and I just hope we can keep it as clean and pure as possible for the many generations to come who will fall in love with it, just as I have.

Online Comment 41 Received 10/05/2018

Deborah,

My name is Brad Gibson. My wife Becky and I have owned property on Higgins Lake for 30 years. When your Department requested public input regarding the State Parks I reviewed the DNR's mission statement. Included in that statement is the phrase "... is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. "

As the mission statement clearly identifies the Parks Department has an obligation to protect our spectacular natural resources. With the recent invasion of Starry Stonewort (SSW) into Higgins Lake, particularly heavy at the South State Park launch site and lagoon, the DNR must shut down that site, drain it, excavate the bottom and place a liner in the launch area. This will be the most effective way to stop the spread of the invasive species around the lake. This can be done without significantly limiting Lake access as Higgins has two additional State operated launch sites, as well as two marinas, and 80 roads ends that provide access to the water.

Furthermore, I strongly advocate for mandatory boat washing at each of the three state launch sites. It is the least the state can do.

Online Comment 42 Received 10/05/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen and everyone at the Michigan DNR:

I am writing this letter to request that the DNR prioritizes cleaning up the lagoon, channel, and boat launch of aquatic invasives, especially Starry Stonewort, since it is tragically spreading into Higgins Lake from the DNR launches.

Our inland lakes are Michigan's greatest treasure and the DNR should REQUIRE boat washes of every boat entering the state parks in every lake in the state. It is a minimal time commitment for boaters for the privilege of accessing Michigan's amazing lakes and would greatly reduce the spread of invasive species. I see the workers already hired and boat washes in place at state park launches but these washes, for no good reason, are OPTIONAL, which makes no sense! The DNR is paying to have the labor and boat washes in place but not requiring them to be utilized! I have visited and swam in lakes from California to Vermont—and none compare to the beauty and sandy bottom of Higgins Lake.

Once invasive species like Starry Stonewort take hold at Higgins Lake there is no going back. The sandy bottom, spring-fed gem of a lake will eventually succumb to being weed infested, similar to what the South State park lagoon looks like.

Thank you for sharing the sense of urgency to clean up the Higgins Lake state park lagoon, channel and boat launch immediately

and for pushing for required boat washes at every Michigan state park launch. I appreciate your service to the state of Michigan and commitment to preserving our state's greatest treasure and setting a goal of clean, beautiful and invasive-species free inland lakes.

Online Comment 43 Received 10/05/2018

It has come to my attention that the lagoon at the South State Park is filled with invasive species that are expanding into Higgins Lake. As a lake front resident on the south end of the lake I am extremely concerned about this encroachment and contamination of our beautiful, clear water.

It is my request and that of many others that the DNR take immediate action to halt the invasion and clean up the mess by shutting down the launch and lagoon.

Thank you for hearing the concerns of those who love and treasure Higgins Lake.

Online Comment 44 Received 10/05/2018

You have a responsibility to protect our environment from pollution of aquatic species.. It appears that you have not protected Higgins Lake from the Starry Stonewart that is coming into HigginsLake. Please clean up the lagoon, channel and West launch.

Online Comment 45 Received 10/05/2018

As a concerned resident, I find it almost amusing that for years you (the DNR) have talked about removing dams and otherwise returning things to their "natural" state, while constructing man made lagoons and launches. To make matters worse, these projects have been completed with little foresight and no controls. And now, it seems, the chickens are coming home to roost. Invasive species such as millfoil and Zebra muscles have been introduced to Higgins Lake, arguably as a direct result of the DNR's mismanagement. The new threat of starry stone wart is direct evidence of your contribution to decline of our precious lake. I implore you to stop turning a blind eye to this problem and to take the drastic steps necessary to eradicate this problem before it becomes too overwhelming to solve.

Drain the lagoon at the South State Park and close it until such time that you do so. To use another cliché, drastic times require drastic measures.

Online Comment 46 Received 10/05/2018

I was surprised to see the weed growth at the South State Park lagoon and channel . It was far more than I have seen in the past 50 years. When I learned that some of this situation was caused by the introduction of a new invasive weed I have become very concerned. I am insisting that the DNR clean up the site and take steps to mandate boat washing to reduce future instances of this type.

A concerned riparian

Online Comment 47 Received 10/05/2018

Hi Ms. Jensen

Thank you for the link to the general management plans (GMPs) for the North and South Higgins Lake State Parks (NHLSP, SHLSP). I have several comments for your consideration in finalizing this document. I appreciate the format and content of the plan and its appendices. I found the documents very easy to read, and the appendices provided sufficient background to support for the plan.

1. Invasive Species

It appears from the public responses to the GMP surveys and the public workshop that invasive species is an important issue for Higgins Lake users. Each GMP includes the goal to “Continue to work proactively with partners to develop and implement measures to prevent, detect and control aquatic and terrestrial invasive species.” I don’t think this goal is measurable as it could be more specific about what proactive steps will be taken with partners. I understand that DNR is holding monthly meetings with the Higgins Lake Foundation and the Higgins Lake Property Owners Association regarding invasive species. This sounds like a great start to working together to understand impacts on Higgins Lake and to develop actions for managing invasive species. I think that the GMP could be improved by being more specific about what needs to be done to prevent, detect and control invasive species that may be introduced by boaters using DNR launch facilities at both state parks and the additional DNR launch site outside of the state parks. Based on public responses, a hot water boat wash that is staffed and mandatory boat washing are possible mitigation measures to reduce invasive species in the lake and that at least some public will support. Investigating or planning to implement the facilities upgrade and personnel assignment for these specific actions could be mentioned in the goals of the GMPs to address invasive species.

This partnership could do the deeper dive by reporting on the current invasive species conditions in Higgins Lake, identifying additional data sources (e. g., agency or university studies), identifying species specific management options, determining effectiveness of current practices, and recommending changes to education, facilities, and management practices. They could provide cost estimates that would then be available to DNR for requesting funding or to one of the Higgins Lake organizations for grant consideration. Some of the questions that they could address include: Does DNR need to add or improve signage regarding invasive species and boat washing? Can park visitors with boats be given information when entering the park requesting them to wash their boats before entering lake? Is there an incentive we could give to boaters for washing boats? (nice designed hat?). What would it take to make boat washing mandatory?

The plans could also include control of starry stonewort and eurasian milfoil that already occurs at DNR boat launch sites. Working with your partners, you can determine the appropriate methods for control and implement these measures to reduce the occurrence and spread of these invasive species.

2. Plan zones

It appears that neither GMP includes the near shore waters adjacent to DNR managed facilities. This is the area where introduction of invasive species is most likely and therefore needs effective management. I recommend that each GMP include the near shore area in the developed recreation zone so it is considered in the GMP goals. This would allow the DNR to meet its mandate to preserve and protect Michigan’s significant natural resources and areas of natural beauty, which I believe includes Higgins Lake waters.

3. West Higgins Lake Boat Launch

My understanding is that there is a third DNR managed boat launch on Higgins Lake outside of the state parks. This launch has no boat wash or any educational effort to encourage boaters to prevent introducing invasive species into Higgins Lake. It appears this is the W. Higgins Lake Boating access site that is part of NHLSP management listed on page 37 of Appendix A of the NHLSP GMP. Why is this location and its potential for introduction of invasive species not addressed in NHLSP GMP? If this location is part of the management of the NHLSP, it should be described and included in the GMP and should be included in any planning on the prevention, detection, and control of invasive species.

4. Goal Priorities in NHLSP GMP and boat parking lot expansion

The number 1 priority is for expansion of the boat parking lot. How will that impact the introduction and control of invasive species? What will be done to mitigate this impact from the increased boat launch use? The GMP should be clear that providing prevention, detection and control of invasive species is a higher priority than increasing the use of the boat launch facility while current invasive species mitigation efforts are not effective.

In expansion of the parking lot, PA 451 of 1994, part 301 requires a permit from DEQ to undertake certain activities relating to inland lakes and streams, such as dredging, fill, marinas, structures, alteration of flow, etc. How will DNR work with DEQ to mitigate potential impacts of the parking lot expansion and the future impact of increased boating activities. Will DNR or DEQ have a public review process for the proposed work before issuing the permit or before commencing work?

5. Educational Component to GMP Goals

In PA 451 of 1994, Part 741 among other things, DNR is required to “....provide an opportunity to understand Michigan’s natural resources and the need to protect and manage those resources.”

In the public survey of the draft GMPs, of the survey respondents for N and S HLSP, less than half of those using the boat launch also used the boat wash. There should be an analysis to determine why the wash is not being used and how to improve the frequency of boat washing. This appears to be a potential lack of education on the importance of boat washing. Informing all boat launch users of the need to wash their boats and to prevent the spread of invasive species would allow DNR to meet this educational mandate. Adding a clear goal in both GMPs to educate the park users to prevent the spread of invasive species would ensure both GMPs are consistent with this mandate. I appreciate that the invasive species partnership in 2018, initiated an enhanced outreach program on the lake, which trained lake users to clean their boats, drain their live wells and bilges, and dispose their unused bait in the trash. DNRs continues support of this effort should be mentioned in the goal.

In addition, there is no mention in the Appendix A.6 of boat licensing requirements or program. Is there a way to educate those receiving license on the need to wash boats before entering an inland lake to reduce the potential for spreading invasive species? This information could be added to the boater education course furthering public education.

6. GMPs need more discussion on Invasive Species

This is one of the most important issues affecting Higgins Lake today. The GMP should provide more detail on this issues in the appendix. The discussion could include the occurrence of invasive species currently in the lake, where, how much and potential impacts and management methods. The Appendix could include a discussion of the impacts invasive species have already had on the lake (e.g., zebra mussels displacing fresh water clams). I believe you have the recent studies related to invasive species in Higgins Lake that can be referenced.

7. Safety issues

Several public comments for the GMP for the SHLSP concerned safety issues at the boat launch. Apparently pedestrian traffic is an issue for those trying to launch and retrieve boats. There should be a facilities change to limit the potential for pedestrians getting in the way of those using the boat launch. There is no mention in the goals to address this concern. Improving the safety of the boat launch should be a high priority goal added to the GMP.

Overall, there seems to be a disconnect between the public responses to the survey and workshop results and the goals and priorities identified in the plans. Public input for both parks were clear that invasive species management is a high concern but neither plan has a specific goal to effectively and immediately address this issue. I appreciate DNR’s efforts so far to address invasive species, but there should be enough known about the issue now to commence specific goals that can be described in the GMPs and used to obtain resources to implement the goals. Thanks for your consideration of my comments and overall I think the GMPs are well written and should provide overall a good basis for future decision making.

Online Comment 48 Received 10/05/2018

Deborah- Please direct the DNR to cleanup the Starry Stonewort at launches and prevent re-introduction of this harmful, invasive marine plant.

Online Comment 49 Received 10/05/2018

Deborah Jensen,

My recent boat launch at the South Higgins Lake State Park was not a good experience. When entering the launch area I was impressed with the Roscommon High school student asking to power wash my boat off to prevent aquatic invasive species from other lakes entering Higgins Lake. He asked & I informed him I had come from Crooked Lake and that the wash would be great ! After launching my boat I must of had 5-10 LBS of seaweed hanging off my trailer which I removed. I was so disgusted with this I decided to work through some logistic hurdles and reload it at the Gerrish Twp. Marina (weed free) for \$5.00 at the end of the day to avoid all that seaweed that I know would be trapped between the boat and the bunks. I believe the DNR is responsible

to clean up the lagoon, channel of seaweed and the aquatic invasive species in the weeds . I was informed that there is a newcomer named the Starry Stonewort, that is spreading into Higgins from the DNR launches. I have been coming to Higgins Lake for 62 years, this & the swimmers itch needs to be addressed NOW. Any questions or feedback is welcome !

Online Comment 50 Received 10/06/2018

Ms,Jenson, although your presentation was interesting and informative it was not the reason many came to your meeting. I hope that you and the additional staff present that evening were not surprised by what many had as our number one concernthe health of Higgins Lake.

For me, the over population of our lake, especially on week ends ,and the invasive species concerns are compromising our fragile Higgins Lake. The audience seemed to have an active frame work of ideas and solutions to begin asking DNR to address our fears. Most importantly boat washing, limited access to our lake on weekends, noise annoyance. DNR, must have some interest in assisting us to an end goal of making our natural resource healthy? What I heard was a lot of political rhetoric of non existing opportunities to partner up with us. Would you agree with any of this?

The presentation seemed primarily focused on how to make our parks bigger and better. More accommodating to larger crowds of people, trying to be inclusive to additional types of boating, sprucing up the facilities,etc. This MIGHT be appropriate, however without addressing the health of our beautiful lake , it seems like a very hurtful approach. Why can't we begin with addressing the health of the lagoon? The west boat launch? Why? As a community we have worked to correct our swimmers itch issue, purchase a DASH boat, develop committees to understand and approach additional concerns.....and there seemed to be no team work from our DNR! It's sad and now VERY annoying to many of us who really care.

My name is Nancy Perry, I am a life long resident of Higgins Lake ,graduating from Roscommon ,currently and for several years I have been a " back lotter" and I own a home on the lake also. I spend 6 months of the year here . My family's business ,beginning in 1944, relied on tourists . I believe " I get it!" We have work to do all the way around ! Fundamentally, economically, historically, scientifically, the list goes on, can we prioritize and work towards an end goal of making our state parks on Higgins Lake and the lake itself...healthier?

P.S. When I said " I get it " I should have furthered described..I am very familiar with the long history of struggles, pull and push, obstacles, opportunities, joy and sadness of living at Higgins Lake. When I was a young girl, it was conversation at my parents store, the dinner table, meetings, hunting and fishing with my father, DNR friends,conversations all around me, from all different residents and occupationsI think it's what made me interested in politics...is it too late to run for Governor??

Online Comment 51 Received 10/10/2018

Hi Deborah:

The DNR has the contacts and clout to help Higgins Lake now and therefore into the future. The time is now for the DNR to step up and clean up the Starry Stonewort in the South State Park lagoon and other places. I don't feel it is time for you and the DNR to throw up your hands and ignore the emergence while still somewhat contained and GET INVOLVED in controlling the spread even if it means temporarily closing down the boat launches to do so.

This can be a turning point for the DNR to team with and help other concerned organizations.

Online Comment 52 Received 10/10/2018

We trust the DNR to protect our natural resources. In this context, please act with urgency to clean up the South Higgins Lake State Park lagoon and other places to eliminate the invasive species Starry Stonewort. We also feel that boat washing should be made manditory to stop these sites from spreading it throughout the lake.

Online Comment 53 Received 10/10/2018

Hello Deborah,

Higgins Lake has been known to me my entire life. I'm 57 years old. It's always been a beautiful place. I know some change is inevitable; like erosion, traffic increase, etc. But the real threat of invasive species to our lake is not acceptable. Especially when there are ways to combat it. And if we're not doing that for whatever reason, that is equally unacceptable!

We appreciate what the DNR does for our natural resources, and expect them to do everything in their power to continue to do so. Enforcing mandatory boat washes at DNR boat launches is the best way to clean up 'visiting' boats before they enter our lake. The DNR must find a way to make this process viable. Please encourage them to find a way.

Online Comment 54 Received 10/10/2018

Please let the DNR know I approve of mandatory boat washing to keep out invasive species from the lake. They should spend their money on that, NOT improving the sites!!!

Online Comment 55 Received 10/10/2018

Good afternoon....the property owners on Higgins Lake need your HELP! The quality of our beautiful lake has been/is being compromised by invasive species. Most recently, the Starry Stonewort has been discovered in numerous places around the lake. If your job is in fact to help protect the inland waters of Michigan, I urge you to mandate that all transit boats be washed and disinfected before they can enter any Michigan lake.

Online Comment 56 Received 10/10/2018

Deborah Jensen: I attended the meeting on September 24 at the McMullen Center and am responding to your request for comments by October 5. I am a member of the board of directors and the Environmental Committee of the HLPOA and my primary concern is the battle with milfoil and stary stonewort in our lake. We need the urgent help of the DNR in this battle to limit the spread of both invasive species to other part of Higgins Lake. Also, now that Higgins Lake has been contaminated, attention is need to insure that it is not spread to other lakes in Michigan from Higgins Lake. I urge you to take the following action steps;

- All I have read about SSW indicates that the best response is immediate action upon discovery. SSW was discovered in July or August in Higgins Lake and action is needed now and not several months down the road.
- The South Higgins Lake State Park lagoon is broadly recognized to be the primary point of SSW contamination. The lagoon should be closed immediately and remain closed until it has been decontaminated and as much SSW and milfoil as possible removed from the approaches to the lagoon. In places in the lagoon the weeds are near the surface of the water and it is impossible to avoid prop chopping when launching or parking boats.
- Similarly, the DNR West Higgins Lake boat launch approach is contaminated and should be closed to prevent the spread of SSW and milfoil until the plant growth can be removed to avoid prop chopping of and spread of these species.
- The approaches at the North Higgins Lake State Park should be monitored frequently to insure that it has not become contaminated.
- All three DNR boat launches should require mandatory boat washing in an out of Higgins Lake. Excellent, free boat washes are available for all three launches and I understand that you are taking steps to further improve boat wash facilities.
- Signs should be posted as soon as possible at all three boat launches warning users that Higgins Lake is contaminated with SSW, milfoil and zebra muscles an that boat washing is mandatory in and out.

Online Comment 57 Received 10/10/2018

I have a home on Higgins Lake and am very concerned about the discovery of Starry Stonewort in the launch areas. When my pontoon was removed from the lake at the South State Park, the trailer had the invasive species hanging over the end. I am hoping that the DNR will be aggressive in controlling this new invasive species.

Online Comment 58 Received 10/10/2018

I am in support of having the DNR take more responsibility to clean up invasive species in Higgins Lake and enforce mandatory boat washing at its launch sites.

Online Comment 59 Received 10/10/2018

Dear Deborah Jensen,

As an owner of property on Higgins lake I am writing to ask you to please take more responsibility for what you are allowing into Higgins lake as hitchhikers on the hundreds and hundreds of boats that put in at the South State Park boat launch. Since I take regular walks through that park I am disgusted with the huge number of boats that are lined up all day long on each Saturday and Sunday – all summer long. They are not required to wash off their boats and those that do make the effort only give their boats a cursory spraying. There must be a better way to police the washing and clean up the Park Lagoon of all the invasive species. Perhaps you need to consider closing that boat launch every other summer – or even every other weekend just to give the lagoon a break from the constant gas, oil and invasive species getting dumped into it every weekend. It is urgent that you stop the spread of Starry Stonewort and make a policed mandatory boat washing launch at Higgins Lake.

Online Comment 60 Received 10/10/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen,

As a property owner at Higgins Lake, I have great pride in the quality of the water and the parks that serve visitors to the lake. Our residence is near the South Higgins Lake State Park and I have concerns about the cleanliness and upkeep of the park boat launch. It is now my understanding that a new invasive species, Starry Stonewort, has been introduced to the lake and most likely was brought in by boats that were not cleaned properly. Before this invasive species gets an insurmountable hold on the lake I encourage the DNR to act quickly to clean the lagoons and to insist on boat washing at all launch sites. It is so much easier and cost effective to control the spread of invasives when attacked early and prevented.

Online Comment 61 Received 10/10/2018

I am writing you this E mail in hopes that your influence may be used to stop the continuous contamination of Higgins Lake by invasive species. The largest spots of contamination are by the access ramps especially by the lagoon that was built for the South Higgins Park. Our lake was once described as the 6th of the most beautiful lake in the world. It, however, has begun to be something less. It may not be noticed by the 100 of thousands park visitors who are only using our lake for weeks at a time. We are the property owners who notice the slow changes brought about by zebra mussels and now the introduction of the Starry Wort which spreads easily. The HLPOA cannot be the only one who is interested in saving our lake. It's time to bring the DNR's resources to bear. Please help us maintain our crystal clear waters for the next generation.

Online Comment 62 Received 10/10/2018

I'm in total agreement that the DNR needs to step up and do their part to stop the spread of Starry Stonewort at Higgins Lake. The problem exists not from the homeowners but from the numbers of boats being launched at the DNR sites. ENFORCED BOAT WASHING AT ALL sites should be mandatory!!!!!!

Online Comment 63 Received 10/10/2018

I strongly agree with the E-mail I'm forwarding. The damage done by invasive species is irreversible.

Dear HLPOA Member,

On September 24th the DNR held a meeting to discuss their plans for improving their parks on our lake. Many of our members were present and voiced their opinions that the DNR has not been responsible in how they allow launching of boats at their launch sites, taking little care to protect our lake from Invasive species being brought in as hitchhikers from other lakes. We now have a new invasive species, Starry Stonewort that has recently been identified in our lake and many signs point to the DNR launch sites as to where the Starry Stonewort was introduced. We are asking the DNR to clean up the South Park lagoon and the other places known to us in order to eliminate the Starry Stonewort and stop their launch sites from spreading it throughout the lake. We also feel that mandatory boat washing is one of the best tools to protect our lake from future such invasions. The DNR has been resistant to helping us. Please let the DNR know that we need them to act with urgency to stop the spread of Starry Stonewort and also have mandatory boat washing at all DNR launch sites in the future.

Online Comment 64 Received 10/10/2018

Good morning Deborah,

Recently I've been made aware of the presence of the invasive starry stonewort in Higgins Lake. The best defense against future and additional contamination of Higgins is to compel boaters from other lakes to wash boats before launching. I'm asking you to involve the DNR in this process by requiring boat owners (from other lakes) to clean boats before boating at Higgins.

Thank you in advance for your help in this matter.

Online Comment 65 Received 10/10/2018

Ms Jensen

I have been a property owner on Higgins Lake for 20 years. I have seen the lake quality on the lake decrease dramatically. I see larger boats, faster and louder boats brought onto the lake. Have you been to the lake in the summer and seen the thousands of boats anchored on the sand bars around the lake? I have witnessed public urination at these sites. Alcohol, sun and peeing in the lake are what makes for a picture perfect setting. PURE MICHIGAN! The boats are entering the lake thru the DNR launch sites at the North and South State parks in addition to the West Launch. Last year the DNR, without a public hearing, expanded the West Launch to accommodate more and larger boats to be launched there. There no longer are enough spots at the West Launch for boats to park so they park on the shoulder of the road creating a very dangerous situation. But somehow this is not enough, your organization wanted to increase the size and number of boats entering the lake. Unfettered access!

It has now been determined unequivocally, that the launch sites which are controlled by your organization has been the source of invasive species introduction into beautiful Higgins Lake. Higgins Lake which was at one time was considered the 6th most beautiful lake in the world, no longer. The saddest part is that the Department of Natural Resources Parks and Recreation Department(DNRPRD) absolutely does not care about the destruction that it has brought to Higgins Lake. When starry stonewort was discovered at the DNRPRD launch sites the DNRPRD had a chance to step up and show that they really do care about the lake by closing the launches until the starry stonewort was removed. Instead it continued to allow boats to be launched from the infested launch sites, dragging the aggressive invasive all over the lake. Once starry stonewort is established there is no recovery for the lake. I encourage you to google Lake Koronis starry stonewort and see the disaster that we are facing, that you are complicit in.

That fact that you are trying to develop a 10-15 year plan for a lake that will not be a viable destination for recreation use is ludicrous. You should be developing a plan for the next 3 months to 2 years hoping that you can save this beautiful lake. I and the rest of the lake community would like to see this plan. When will anyone be presenting this plan to those of us that truly appreciate this

once beautiful lake. Take your 10-15 year plan and keep it off our lake.

I thought that after the Flint water crisis that the State of Michigan employees would be sensitive to the way that it responded to and treated the public after known mismanagement by state officials. Obviously this is not the case. I see no difference at all in this scenario. I hope that all state employees that are involved in the lack of response to and complicit in this environmental disaster be held accountable. At all levels!

This issue is discussed every place that I go. Your department has a public relations disaster on its hands. Somebody stand up and for once do the right thing. People have had enough.....

I welcome your response.

Online Comment 66 Received 10/10/2018

DNR I treat the lake like it IS the 6th most beautiful lake in the world. How about you? Would LOVE to hear your explanation as to why two boat washes are built and NOT made mandatory. Now look where we are. You are a disgrace Indeed!!!

Online Comment 67 Received 10/10/2018

I attended the DNR program on Monday and was quite dismayed that there is so little effort by the state of Michigan to alleviate the SSW species infiltrating our lake.

We need to team up to control and remediate this threat now. Stop the launch, close the lagoon at South Higgins State Park and clean this up. Every means at your disposal must be used to keep this from spreading.

There is still time before ice to do something proactive for the rest of our lake.

You don't have enough money to clean up the whole lake once this species spreads AND/OR attempt to avoid the next invasive species. Make the hot water boat wash mandatory. We can help with manpower and funds to do this now- NO ONE has the funds or means to clean up the whole lake.

This is everyone's problem!! It is not right to pass this problem, you are facilitating, off to the resident land owners and local govts.

Everything else in your future plans are a pipe dream if you don't have a way to control these devastating side effects.

PLEASE, It is time to think inside the box.

Online Comment 68 Received 10/10/2018

Please add my name to those who want to keep this invasive species out of Higgins Lake.

Online Comment 69 Received 10/10/2018

Deborah,

Starry Stonewort has recently been identified in our lake and many signs point to the DNR launch sites as to where the Starry Stonewort was introduced. Please help protect Higgins Lake from invasive species that are being introduced into our lake as hitchhikers from other lakes.

I am asking the DNR to clean up the South Park lagoon and the other places known to Higgins Lake in order to eliminate the Starry Stonewort and stop their launch sites from spreading it throughout the lake. I feel that mandatory boat washing is one of the best tools to protect Higgins Lake from future such invasions. Please help to stop the spread of Starry Stonewort and other invasive species by having mandatory boat washing at all DNR launch sites in the future.

Online Comment 70 Received 10/10/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen,

I am a Higgins Lake riparian and former officer of the Higgins Lake Property Owners Association (HLPOA) Board of Directors. I'm writing at the suggestion of the current HLPOA Board of Directors, per their note (below). You may not know this, but the HLPOA is one of the oldest, largest and most respected lake associations in the state, having been formed in the late 1930's and incorporated as a non-profit under the State of Michigan in 1940.

I was unable to attend the recent (Sept 24th) DNR Parks and Rec Div public meeting held by Anna Sylvester due to illness, but I have been informed of the discussions that took place during this meeting. I am particularly disturbed by those discussions in the meeting dealing with the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) now occurring in Higgins Lake and the apparent ambivalence on the part of the DNR to 1.) take appropriate action to prevent the spread of AIS, and 2.) accept the responsibility to remove Starry Stonewort (SSW) from known introduction sites at DNR boat launch sites on Higgins Lake. I believe I am correct by informing you that one of the DNR's AIS "experts" attended Anna's meeting and made the rather ridiculous and unsubstantiated claim that SSW was introduced into Higgins Lake by someone dumping the contents of their fish aquarium(s) into the lake. Really?!?! One or more riparians left their home(s) and went to each of the DNR launch sites specifically to dump their aquarium? Can you imagine the absurdity of this claim-- the DNR's AIS "expert" is in denial.

I respectfully request the DNR assume responsibility for eradicating SSW from Higgins Lake while it is still confined to a relatively small number of known locations, concentrated at DNR boat launch sites. If this means the South State Park Boat Launch Lagoon needs to be closed for launching, blocked off, drained and all AIS plants (Eurasian Water Milfoil, Starry Stonewort, etc.) be mechanically removed this fall, then so be it. Or would you rather wait until the costs escalate into the hundreds of millions of dollars to control this problem in one of the most beautiful lakes in the country?

Other states in the union (Wyoming, Oregon, etc.) have very strict controls over the launching of boats in their state's lakes. What is the MI DNR's excuse for not adopting more stringent requirements for the launching of AIS-free boats in MI? Don't you recall the phrase that used to be stamped into every automobile license plate issued by the state of MI decades ago? It was "Water Wonderland." No other state could make that claim back in the 60's. How much longer will we be able to say that if we fail to adequately address the AIS problems we know we have here?

Online Comment 71 Received 10/10/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen,

I am writing you about my concerns regarding the invasive species known as Starry Stonewort that has been found in Higgins Lake. I would love to see the DNR take a more active role in protecting the lake by introducing mandatory boat washing at launch points on the lake. Thank you for considering and for your work to make Higgins Lake a great place for all people.

Online Comment 72 Received 10/10/2018

Higgins Lake has a new invasive species, Starry Stonewort, that was found in the waters near the South Higgins Lake State Park. This will only get worse unless the DNR DEMANDS that people wash their boats. Please help us with this effort.

Online Comment 73 Received 10/10/2018

Ms. Jensen:

I am concerned about the new invasive species that have been identified in Higgins Lake. My home is near the South Higgins Lake State Park, and the introduction of the Starry Stonewort appears to have originated from the boat launch and lagoon there. Please stop the spread of invasive species and institute mandatory boat washing at all DNR launch sites as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this.

Online Comment 74 Received 10/10/2018

As a long time property owner on Higgins Lake we enjoy this great watershed. To keep and maintain the water quality all efforts must be made to keep evasive species from entering the lake. Please consider mandatory boat washings at all DNR maintained launch sites. In addition cleaning up the areas where Starry Stonewort is present should be a top priority for the DNR. Thank you in advance for your help.

Online Comment 75 Received 10/10/2018

Hello Deborah Jensen:

I am writing you to express my concern about invasive species entering Higgins Lake.

I am in favor mandatory boat washing for both the north and south state parks.

Online Comment 76 Received 10/10/2018

Dear Ms. Jensen:

My family has been on Higgins Lake for more than 100 years. I have been fortunate to grow up on this beautiful, pristine and unadulterated lake for most of my life.

Tragically, in recent years, I have watched as the DNR has knowingly launched literally thousands of boats at its three launch sites and caused the introduction of three invasive species. The worst of these, Starry Stonewort, has recently been found choking the lagoon at the South State Park and its channel leading out into the lake. It has also been found in heavy concentrations at the West Launch Site. Every boat that you launch, at either site, gets tangled in it and spreads it to other parts of the lake, where it has already been found.

You have been, and continue, to violate the clear mandate of the DNR as required by our State Constitution. Your mission is to protect our environment. However, you are polluting our environment and what is perhaps the most beautiful of the lakes in our State. You are continuing to do this despite knowing you are spreading State "prohibited" species. This is unconscionable to me and to all those who value our environment and natural resources. I can think of no excuse for you not taking the following action:

1. Immediately close all of your launch sites on Higgins Lake.
2. Take the necessary action to completely eliminate Starry Stonewort and any other invasive species located in or near your launch sites.
3. As soon as possible, devise a comprehensive plan to locate and eliminate Starry Stonewort wherever it has been carried into Higgins Lake.
4. Install and require mandatory boat washing at all your launch sites and require all boats launched at those sites to be free of invasive species.

I would appreciate a response to this email with an explanation as to what the DNR is going to do to implement these actions. If the DNR is not willing or able to do so, please explain why.

Thank you for your courtesy

B.7 Response to Public Input Comments



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



DANIEL EICHINGER
DIRECTOR

January 29, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

SUBJECT: North and South Higgins Lake State Park Management Plans

Thank you for your feedback about the Higgins Lake State Park management plans. The DNR received correspondence from 77 people, many of whom provided similar comments. Below are responses to some of the more common statements.

Comment: The DNR has increased public access to Higgins Lake by expanding the west launch

The work at the west launch that occurred in September and October of 2017 was to replace eighty 6'x12' ramp planks (measuring 96' wide by 60' long) with ninety 4'x18' planks (measuring 108' wide by 60' long). The only reason for the additional 12 feet in width was because current design guide standards as well as ramp plank sizes have changed since the site was originally established. The number of launch lanes remained the same after the project.

The west launch was not included in either of the park management plans because it does not fall within the geographical boundary lines of either park.

Comment: There are concerns about the detection of starry stonewort

The starry stonewort in Higgins Lake was first detected in late July of 2018. A separate survey was conducted by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) on August 8, 2018 that sampled aquatic plants at 33 locations throughout the lake. Starry stonewort was detected at six of those locations in depths from 1 to 30 feet. Based on the size and density of the infestations, starry stonewort has likely been in the lake for a few years. It is unknown if the population will expand beyond where it is currently found or what effects it may have on the lake.

The DNR shared its 2019 treatment plan with the Higgins Lake Foundation (HLF) and the Higgins Lake Property Owners Association (HLPOA). Press releases and treatment dates will be posted at the parks and on the DNR press release web page ([www.michigan.gov/DNR/news releases](http://www.michigan.gov/DNR/news%20releases)). For more information about starry stonewort, visit www.michigan.gov/invasives.

Comment: The DNR has not done anything to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species

The DNR works collaboratively with the DEQ and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in the Michigan Invasive Species Program. Together, these agencies work to prevent the introductions of invasive species, detect them if they arrive, and control them when possible. More information can be found at www.michigan.gov/invasives.

North and South Higgins Lake State Park Management Plans

Page 2

January 29, 2019

The DNR – Parks and Recreation Division has spent significant resources on Higgins Lake specifically. The DNR has partnered with the HLF and the HLPOA on the installation and maintenance of the two boat washes. In 2017, a workgroup formed between these three organizations to collaborate on Higgins Lake issues. Results from that collaboration in 2018 include:

- A DNR grant of \$75,000 to the HLF to implement invasive species outreach activities at the three state-owned boating access sites
- The purchase of two CD3 waterless cleaning stations, which were installed at the west and south boating access sites
- The washing of 1,657 boats prior to launching in Higgins Lake
- Monthly meetings to share information about aquatic invasive species, the DNR budget, and action items
- Physical removal of aquatic invasive plants at the boating access sites, paid for by the DNR and executed by the HLF DASH boat
- Installation of signage at road ends and in marinas, reminding boaters about the importance of cleaning boats and equipment to stop the spread of invasive species
- A joint meeting with the DEQ after the detection of starry stonewort to discuss the findings and provide guidance about next steps
- Research into the feasibility of moving the north boat wash to North Higgins Lake State Park.

Comment: The DNR should institute a mandatory boat wash program at Higgins Lake

In the summer of 2018, the DNR researched factors that would need to be in place prior to instituting a mandatory boat wash program. These include:

- *Legal statute that outlines the exact requirement and penalties for non-compliance.*

A mandatory boat wash would require legislative action.

- *Improved wastewater disposal system at the south park.*

The current system at the South Higgins boat wash is designed to filter 600 gallons per day and is permitted by the DEQ for that amount. To service every incoming and out-going boat, the system would need to be upgraded to accommodate the increase of wastewater, including a revised DEQ permit to increase the amount of water that can be used.

North and South Higgins Lake State Park Management Plans

Page 3

January 29, 2019

- *Funding to staff the boat washes.*
The boat washes would need to be staffed to ensure that all boaters used the wash, that boats were cleaned properly, and that the boat wash equipment was used in an appropriate manner.
- *Certification system.*
Boats entering the north or west sites would need to provide documentation that they used a boat wash prior to launching.
- *Funding to staff the north and west sites.*
Staff would ensure that all boats were certified from a boat wash.
- *A solution to the timing concerns.*
It takes an average of 5 minutes to wash a boat. A busy day at the south site can involve over 300 boats being launched and retrieved. If every boat were washed, logistically it would take several hours just for everyone to launch.

In addition, for the lake to have every boat washed prior to launching, there should be similar systems in place at the township and private launch sites, as well as road ends. Research indicates that to prevent the spread of invasive species, boats should be cleaned after retrieving them from the water body. This would result in leaving any potential invasive species at the lake where they were found, rather than transporting them to a different lake and discarding them where they do not yet exist. With Higgins Lake having Eurasian watermilfoil, starry stonewort, and zebra mussels, the DNR would highly encourage boaters to clean their boats upon leaving Higgins Lake as well to avoid transporting these species to other lakes.

Considering these hurdles, the DNR does not support a mandatory boat wash program at this time.

Comment: The DNR should close the south boat launch

The DNR is willing to close launch lanes temporarily at the south boat launch for aquatic weed treatment; however, the DNR does not anticipate closing the entire access site.

Comment: The DNR should drain the lagoon

Draining the lagoon to harvest any aquatic weeds would be an expensive and drastic measure without any assurance of success because many plant propagules can remain viable in moist environments. The permitting that would be required for such an action

North and South Higgins Lake State Park Management Plans
Page 4
January 29, 2019

would be intensive. Finally, the lagoon provides habitat for threatened and endangered species, which need to remain protected.

The DNR's 2019 invasive species treatment plan does incorporate dredging the lagoon. Although the intent of the dredging is to improve the navigational channel, it will have an impact on any aquatic plants present. Public notice will be posted at the facilities as well as on the DNR webpage as referenced above.

Comment: The DNR should not encourage overnight boat camping by providing docks with electrical output

This was removed from the park management plan per the recommendations from stakeholders.

Comment: The DNR should restrict the size/number/horsepower of boats launching in Higgins Lake

The DNR does not have the legislative authority to act on this request. The size of the launch and the depth of the water is the major limiting factor for what types of boats can be launched. Oversized boats may need a special permit.

Thank you for your questions and comments, if you feel you have further questions, please feel free to contact Christina Baugher, at BaugherC@michigan.gov, or at (517) 284-5835.

Sincerely,



Debbie Jensen
Park Management Plan Administrator

cc: Mr. Ron Olson, DNR
Ms. Anna Sylvester, DNR
Mr. Bill Doan, DNR
Mr. Josh Pellow, DNR
Ms. Rachel Roberts, DNR
Ms. Christina Baugher, DNR