

# Ninth Annual MiCorps Training and Conference

## October 28-29, 2013



***Community Efforts to Build Awareness  
and Stewardship Among Lake  
Homeowners***

Robert C. Myers, DVM  
Rainbow Lake, Perrinton, Michigan



## Topics for Discussion

- Background

- What is Rainbow Lakes

- Rainbow Lakes Governance

- The Lake Community

- An Approach to Building Awareness

- Alignment Amongst the Parties

- Conclusions

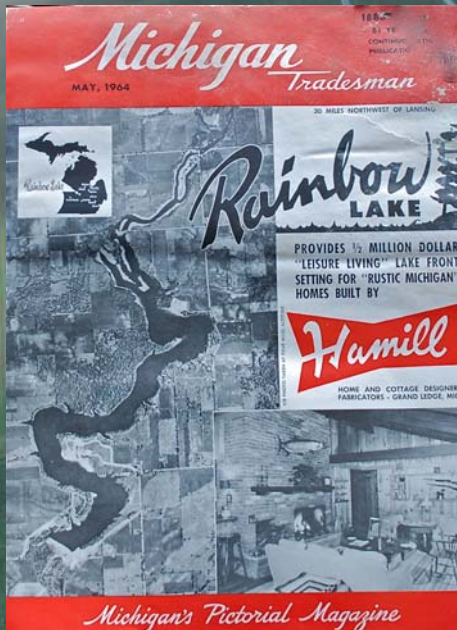
- Acknowledgements

- Q and A



# Characteristics of Rainbow Lake

- 450 acre, private impoundment built in early 1960s
- Located in southern Gratiot County
- Contained within Upper Maple River Watershed
- Receives drainage from some 50,000 acres--mostly farmland
- There is a single private boat launch
- Effluent enters the Maple River some 2 miles to the south







## Governance: Rainbow Lakes Maintenance Corp.

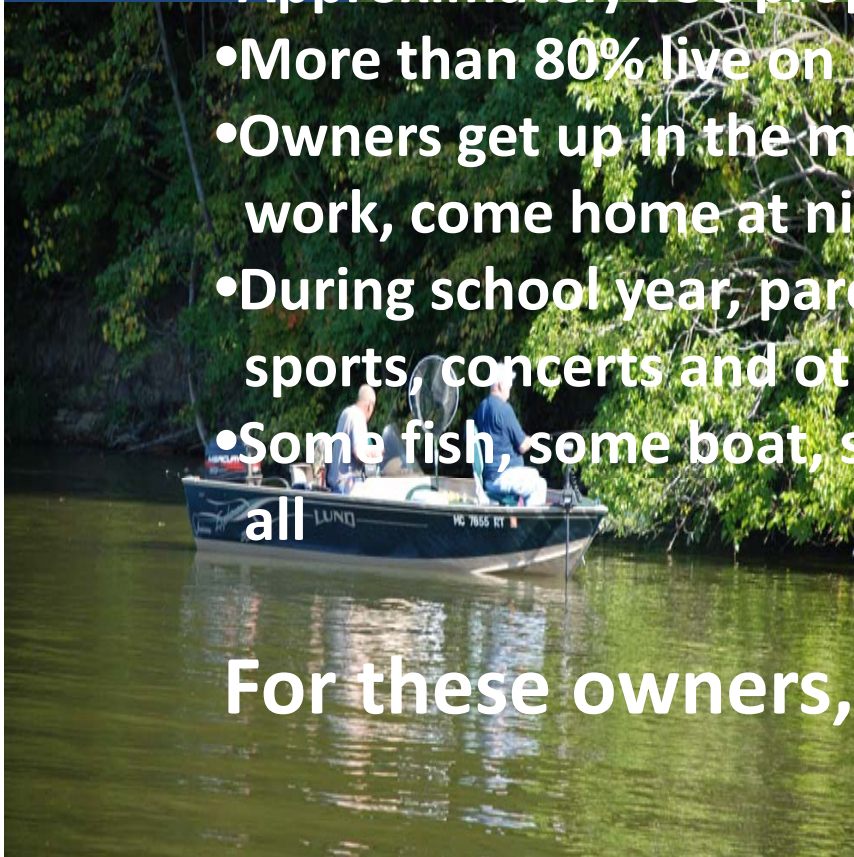
- Private, non-profit Corporation
- By-laws approved by members
- Nine member Board of Directors
- Board meets monthly
- Mandatory annual fee for all property owners
- Predictable budget, based on number of property owners
- Regular office hours



## Rainbow Lake—The Local Community

- Approximately 750 property owners
- More than 80% live on lake full time
- Owners get up in the morning and go to work, come home at night
- During school year, parents occupied with sports, concerts and other school activities
- Some fish, some boat, some don't use the lake much at all

For these owners, the lake is not getaway





A woman and a young girl are in a blue kayak on a body of water. The woman is wearing sunglasses and a dark shirt, and the girl is wearing a bright yellow life vest and pink shorts. Both have their arms raised in the air. The background shows a dense line of green trees under a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

## The Local Community--Continued

### Desensitization Yes or No?

#### On the one hand:

- Low voter turnout for Board member elections
- Light attendance at Board meetings and annual meeting
- Field day attendance
- Low participation in spring and fall clean-up

#### On the other hand:

- Terrific attendance at July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks show
- Five watercraft storage sheds completely full each winter
- Field day attendance





## **Rainbow Lakes Awareness Approach**

**Causation for Apparent Apathy is  
Important to Consider But No Matter  
Causation, the Equation Is:**

**Information + Education =  
Heightened Awareness and Better Stewardship**



## Rainbow Lakes Awareness /Stewardship

### Activities

2013/2014

Topic	Status
Become LSLI class member and 2013 graduate	Complete
Be elected PLMC Board V.P.	Complete
Develop and conduct educational Field Day	Complete
Develop presentation on aquatic plants in Rainbow Lakes	Complete
Initiate CLMP on Rainbow Lake	Spring 2014
Develop fishing montage	Complete
Develop boating montage	Complete
Develop nature montage	Complete
Obtain expert consultation on shoreline erosion	In progress
Obtain memberships in MLSA and Friends of the Maple River	Complete
Develop property owner handbook	Spring 2014
Design and build a natural shoreline landscape feature	Summer 2014
Develop/implement grade school lake and stream tutorial	Fall 2014



APRIL 2014





## Rainbow Lakes—Alignment of Interests

### The Lake

- ✓ Water Clarity
- ✓ Sedimentation
- ✓ Shoreline Erosion
- ✓ Nutrient Load
- Fisheries Health

### The UMR Watershed

- ✓ Phosphorus
- ✓ Sedimentation
- ✓ Erosion

### CLMP Testing

- ✓ Transparency
- ✓ Phosphorus
- ✓ Chlorophyll a
- ✓ Dissolved Oxygen
- Aquatic Plant Survey
- Exotic Aquatic Plant Watch






## Conclusions

- Rainbow Lakes may not be a typical Michigan inland lake
- Nevertheless, the needs to increase stewardship are common and universal to all lakes in Michigan
- Building awareness is key to this process
- In the beginning, awareness has to be based on information and education
- Creating heightened awareness is not a project, but a long term program of projects
- In our state, we are so fortunate to have ample networking resources to achieve sustainable awareness, through developing programs to do so





# **The Lake and Stream Leaders Institute 2013 Graduating Class**

## **Other Acknowledgements:**

Clinton County Conservation District, MLSA, MICorp, Rainbow Lakes Maintenance Corporation, Rainbow Lakes Garden Club, Friends of the Maple River, Paige Filice, Ronnie Dush, Becky Ehle, Rich Blemaster, Mary Morris



A wide-angle photograph of Niagara Falls, showing the massive volume of water cascading over the edge. The water is white with foam and spray. In the background, a line of green trees separates the falls from a city skyline featuring several tall buildings. The sky is overcast with soft, grey clouds. The foreground is framed by dark green foliage on the left and right sides.

Questions?????