



# Crystal Whitecaps

The Newsletter of the Crystal Lake & Watershed Association

Vol. 2, No. 2, SPRING/SUMMER 2006

## **CONSENT JUDGMENT IN MDOT CASE ON HOLD**

MDOT has complied with several agreed upon corrective measures involving the M-22 project requested by **CLWA** in its Complaint against MDOT, including cleaning out sedimentation in 5 culverts, pursuant to the terms agreed upon by the parties on April 14th. MDOT has objected, however to one of the terms in a proposed Consent Judgment providing that **CLWA** may petition the Court for further corrective action during the next 5 years in the event that the measures taken, and to be taken by MDOT, fail to prevent the discharge of sediments into Crystal Lake. The dispute over the terms of the Judgment will be determined by Judge Batzer at a hearing to be scheduled this summer.

Background: **CLWA** objected to several construction procedures taken by MDOT in connection with the M-22 project (Pilgrim Highway and Crystal Drive); including use of fertilizers containing phosphorus, steep exposed slopes along M-22, failure to clean sediment out of 5 culverts, and failure to construct large enough ditches or "French drains". Last fall MDOT agreed not to use the phosphorus fertilizer, but subsequently refused to take any other corrective measures requested by **CLWA**. This spring **CLWA** commenced suit in Benzie County Circuit Court alleging that MDOT violated the Michigan Soil Erosions and Sedimentation Control Act ("SESCA") and the Michigan Environmental Protection Act ("MEPA").

The April 14th hearing was on **CLWA's** Order to Show Cause why a Temporary Injunction or Equable Order should not Issue. At Judge Batzer's direction, the parties negotiated all day and placed the terms of a Consent Judgment imposing corrective measures on MDOT on the Record.

## **PREPARATIONS CONTINUE FOR SEPTEMBER 11TH BOAT LAUNCH HEARING**

On June 7th, Law Judge Dennis W. Mack and the parties' attorneys and representatives conducted a site visit to the Boat Launch premises. **CLWA's** representatives were very satisfied with the site visit, which focused primarily on the wetland issues.

## **CLWA ANNUAL MEETING**

9:30-11:00 AM, Saturday, July 22, 2006, at the CSA Meeting Hall 2128 Pilgrim Highway (M-22). There will be a short business meeting and election followed by the featured speaker:

Dr. Stacy L. Daniels, **The Crystal Lake Watershed - Concerns and Actions.**

There are many ways to view the Crystal Lake Watershed - as a student, an owner of property within the watershed, and a visitor. We each have different perspectives, but share the benefits of its use and enjoyment for fishing, boating, swimming, recreation, working, and living. We must balance our concerns for environmental protection and sustainable development with our actions for impacting watershed management through water quality monitoring; land use & development; and education and communications. Together we are stewards of the Crystal Lake Watershed.

*"Protecting the integrity of Crystal Lake, Benzie County, now and for the future"*



## **CRYSTAL LAKE “WALKABOUT” - SPRING 2006**

The **Crystal Lake “Walkabout”** is an educational program to teach students, property owners, and visitors about the Crystal Lake Watershed. This “hands-on” approach to public education involves observational monitoring and environmental exploring. Participants “walk about” Interpretive Sites representing different parts of the Crystal Lake Watershed. The program focuses on hydrology - how water moves about the Watershed. It also addresses water quality, ecology, land use, zoning, septic tanks, green belts, sustainable development, and watershed management. Since 1994, the “Walkabout” has now been presented to 2,646 students, residents, and visitors to the Crystal Lake Watershed. In 2002, it became a biennial event for all 6th and 8th grade students in Benzie County. There is also a special program in mid-summer open to the public.

The **CLWA** cosponsored the **Crystal Lake “Walkabout”** on Wednesday, May 24, 2006 for 130 students from the 6th grade science classes of Benzie Central Schools. The Sites visited this Spring were Crystal Lake at the CSA beach (water quality), Point Betsie (the lighthouse), and the U.S. Coast Guard - Station Frankfort (boat safety & seamanship). Volunteer environmental professionals described environmental features of each Site and conducted group activities.

Each participant received a “Walkabout” T-shirt with a colorful map of the Crystal Lake Watershed, and the “Walkabout” Interpretive Manual [www.clwa.us/educ\\_comm.htm#EDUCATION](http://www.clwa.us/educ_comm.htm#EDUCATION), which is both An Educational Primer for Students, and A Reference Handbook for Property Owners and Visitors. It contains maps and facts, descriptions of nine interpretive sites, a chronology of historical events in the Crystal Lake Watershed, and a list of concerns of property owners and visitors.

We sincerely appreciate the dedicated teachers of Benzie Central Schools who supported the “Walkabout” and most importantly their students. Special thanks also to the Site Interpreters: Doug Gibson, Lake Ann Elementary School; Becky Gray, Great Lakes Water Quality Laboratory; Amy Ferris, Friends of Point Betsie Lighthouse; Judy Cunningham, Michigan Land Use Institute; Kyle Axtell and Barbara Graves, Benzie Conservation District; and Doug Leavell and his crew, USCG.

## **CRYSTAL LAKE “WALKABOUT” - SUMMER 2006**

**9 AM – 12 Noon, Tue., July 25, 2006, starting at the Crystal Lake Yacht Club, 3491 Pilgrim Hwy.** Our popular educational program is open to the public of all ages. Learn about the Crystal Lake Watershed at three selected interpretive sites: Crystal Lake Yacht Club (groundwater quality); Point Betsie (dune ecology); and Betsie Valley Trail (river wetlands and Greta Lakes). A fee of \$10 per individual includes one T-shirt and Interpretive Manual. Family rates are available. Additional “Walkabout” T-shirts, Watershed maps, and Interpretive Manuals are available for purchase from the **CLWA**.) Signup at CSA or CLYC, or call the **CLWA** at 231/882-4001 by Monday July 24th.

## **OTHER SUMMER EVENTS**

Elberta Arts and Crafts Fair (July 15, 2006).

Crystal Lake Art Show (July 19, 2006)

CSA Art and Craft Fair, Congregational Summer Assembly (July 26, 2006).

Crystal Lake Marathon (August 12, 2006). (**CLWA** will sponsor a team.)

Frankfort Art Fair (August 19, 2006).



## **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM**

A Geographical Information System (GIS) uses a computer to analyze data and make maps and charts. Layers of information like those in the GIS map of the Crystal Lake Watershed ([www.clwa.us/GRAPHICS/crystalws082801a.jpg](http://www.clwa.us/GRAPHICS/crystalws082801a.jpg)) can be “sandwiched” together to show Watershed shapes; villages, roads, and other places; lake depths and ridge heights; tributaries and wetlands; critical slopes; vegetation cover; land use and zoning; monitoring locations, and “*Walkabout*” sites. The “center” of Crystal Lake (44° 39’ 33” N Lat., 086° 09’ 23” W Long.) is about ½ way between the Equator and the North Pole, and about ¼ of the way around the world from the Prime Meridian. Thanks to a generous monetary grant, and another grant from ESRI of software and training materials, the **CLWA** will now be able to develop its own internal GIS capabilities.

## **CLWA WEBSITE**

The **CLWA** Website at [www.CLWA.us](http://www.CLWA.us) contains the history of the Crystal Lake Watershed, many maps, facts and figures, descriptions of the **CLWA**, activities by our Water Quality, Education & Communications, Zoning & Land Use, and Financial Development Committees, photographs, a calendar of events, publications and references, and links to other websites. Please visit.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

Special thanks to Lisa Christian for her efforts in creating the 2006 CLWA Directory.

Kyle Axtell will be taking a lead role in providing water quality monitoring services to the CLWA replacing Paul Murphy. Kyle is the Environmental Outreach Coordinator for the Benzie Conservation District where he promotes the use of greenbelts (natural vegetative buffers) along waterways.

Our continued thanks to the Benzie County Marine Patrol who assist the CLWA in water quality monitoring. We provided them with a Secchi disk to monitor water clarity on a regular basis.

Thanks to Josh Mills and City of Frankfort for improving the Bellows Road Beach to reduce erosion.

## **CONCERNS & ISSUES**

Management of the unique environment of the Crystal Lake Watershed is important for three reasons: (1) to determine what we know about our Watershed from the past, (2) to plan to use our Watershed in an environmentally sustainable manner today, and (3) to implement projects to protect our Watershed for the future. The following concerns have been/will be addressed in Crystal Whitecaps.

- Septic Systems, Holding Tanks, & Sewers
- Lawns, Gardens, Fertilizers, & Pesticides
- Greenbelts, Land Conservancies, Scenic Vistas
- Boating, Swimming, & Fishing
- Litter, Trash, Garbage, & Hazardous Materials
- Planning & Zoning
- Land Use & Water Access
- Construction & Development
- Land Cover, Trees, Vegetation - the Viewshed
- Critical Areas - Steep Slopes, Wetlands, Dunes
- Erosion & Shoreline Protection
- Soil, Sediment, & Nutrient Runoff
- Atmospheric Deposition & Ozone
- Aquatic Vegetation, Fish, & Waterfowl
- Algae, Bacteria, & Mold
- Nonindigenous Plants & Animals
- Aesthetics & Noise
- Natural, Economic, & Social Challenges



## **CLWA MISSION**

The purpose of the **CLWA** is to protect and promote the natural qualities of Crystal Lake and its surrounding Watershed. The goal of the **CLWA** is to preserve for future generations the beauty and recreational resources of Crystal Lake and its Watershed. To these ends, the **CLWA** will engage in water-quality monitoring, educational programs, promotion of harmonious land development, and promotion of the safe use of Crystal Lake. It will conduct other such activities as needed to advocate and ensure the continued aesthetic beauty and environmental integrity of the Lake and its Watershed.

## **CLWA BOARD** (\*)

Jim Laarman was introduced to environmental issues early by family northern lake vacations. His main interest is Michigan's Great and inland lakes. Trained as a hydraulic/hydrologic Civil Engineer at UM, his experiences in water resources have been with an Ann Arbor consulting firm, the Waterways Experiment Station-Vicksburg, the Great Lakes Survey and Detroit District (Corps of Engineers), his own consulting firm (Lake Regimen Engineering), and as a Director on Boards for Walnut Lake and Crystal Lake. He was also a substitute high school teacher in math and science. His academic hobbies are in regional historical societies, libraries, and art centers. He and his wife, Pat, their friends, children, and grandchildren, can be found swimming, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, cross country skiing, and snowshoeing our local waters, or hiking and biking our beautiful trails.

(\*) Other Board Members will continue to be featured in future newsletters.

## **CLWA MEMBERSHIP**

Thanks to all past members of the Crystal Lake Association and past donors to the Crystal Lake Watershed Fund for your financial support to maintain and preserve Crystal Lake. Membership in the new Crystal Lake & Watershed Association (**CLWA**) offers a channel for your ideas and concerns, plus an active voice in the protection of the Crystal Lake Watershed. Membership includes:

- White Caps, The CLWA Newsletter (published biannually).
- The Annual Membership Directory.
- Progress reports on Crystal Lake Watershed activities and issues of concern.
- The Michigan Riparian magazine (free subscription, if desired).
- Participation through voting power.

The **CLWA** is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization with over 1,200 members that support a comprehensive program of activities affecting students, riparian owners, and visitors in the Crystal Lake Watershed. The **CLWA** encourages members to contact local and state government on local issues of critical importance to the sustainable development of the Crystal Lake Watershed. **CLWA** membership dues start at only \$35 per year. Gifts to the 2020 Vision Fund are used for stewardship projects, scientific studies, and educational programs; and to the Endowment Fund for future needs. Please feel free to contact the **CLWA** with your concerns and comments.

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