

May 9, 2021

Leelanau County Board of Commissioners:

I am a full time Leelanau County resident who owns lake frontage. I was alarmed after reading the "Our View" section in a recent issue of the *Leelanau Enterprise* and an article published online by the *Leelanau Ticker* for a variety of reasons. These articles discuss the invasive Eurasian Watermilfoil that has been discovered in Lake Leelanau.

Eurasian Watermilfoil threatens the health of the lake and our ability to enjoy it; action needs to be taken, but I question the method the Lake Leelanau Lake Association has chosen. They would like to create, in essence, a new layer of government with appointed board members without ample opportunity for community input. Lakefront owners are not the only people who benefit from use and enjoyment of the lake, but we are the only group targeted to fund this plan. The lake association's plan appears to have no definite end time, dollar amount or scope of authority in terms of possessing the ability to tax for any actions that they deem necessary to "protect" the lake. I find that to be fiscally irresponsible. The term "ongoing" for time and money is not an acceptable response. Once the preservation board is created the county board will have no oversight and would provide a "blank check".

In the *Ticker* article, the president of the lake association, Tom Hiatt, gives the impression that most lakefront property owners support the creation of a preservation board. He states that he has spoken with lakefront property owners who are also association members and "so far the overwhelming number of responses...have been supportive of the proposal to create an independent lake board." However, Hiatt neglects to mention that only approximately 30% of lakefront property owners are members of the lake association.

From what I have researched regarding the Eurasian Watermilfoil, this is becoming a state-wide issue and it seems more logical for the State or DNR to help provide assistance and funds for all bodies of water that are affected by this problem. Rather than each municipality battling this problem, resources and tools need to be pooled at the State level to fight it.

I am asking you to proceed with caution before creating this board and fully consider the future implications. There are other options to help fund the fight against Milfoil rather than creation of a board. Expecting only lakefront property owners to shoulder an ongoing financial burden is not fair. The County Board of Commissioners, who were elected by the voters, should determine if funds need to be devoted to this issue rather than appointed board members.

Sincerely,

Sarah Bordeaux