

## **Stony Lake Improvement Board**

The summer of 2013 was the third year in the five-year management plan presented by the Stony Lake Improvement Board in September 2010.

From July 19-26, Mike's Clearwater Harvesting took out 55 truckloads of cut plants from Stony Lake, composting them at a local farm, at a cost of \$17,500. This was about \$2000 less than the bill for summer 2012. After the harvesting in 2012, concerns were raised by a few that the amount of vegetation removed might be harmful to water quality, especially in marshy areas of the lake. Progressive AE, the contractor for the five-year plan, worked with lakefront owners to identify areas of the lake that could be left in a natural state, and developed a map for the harvesting company to follow. The result in 2013 was acceptable to all.

Small areas of Eurasian Watermilfoil, an exotic aquatic plant that can become invasive, were treated with herbicides (according to the goals of the Board, only invasive species can be targeted for treatment).

On September 17, the Lake Improvement Board met at Benona Township Hall. Tony Groves, Water Resources Practice Leader in Progressive AE's Civil Engineering Group, reported on the summer's activities. Mr. Groves' company is continuing to monitor water quality in Stony Lake and has assembled previous data recorded by volunteers over the years as part of the assessment. This information and a discussion of the lake and its tributaries, as well as responsible shoreline management, will be compiled into a Stony Lake guide, to be produced and mailed to property owners in the spring of 2014. The booklet and other information about the lake will also be available on the SLPOA website.

There was discussion about a letter from the Stony Acres Property Owners Association about use of their boat launch by the harvesting equipment and trucks. The Board is crafting a plan to track road and boat ramp damage and reimburse the association for necessary repairs and reinforcements. Much appreciation was expressed to the neighbors at Stony Acres for putting up with the noise and inconvenience of the harvesting process.

The Lake Improvement Board was organized in 2009 by a vote of the Benona and Claybanks Township Boards. Members of the Board include representatives from each township, a Stony Lake resident, a representative from the Oceana County Commission, and from the Oceana County Drain Commissioner's office. The Board was formed under provisions of Michigan's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act. It is funded by an assessment on Stony Lake property owners.

The Board contracted Progressive AE of Grand Rapids to develop a five-year management plan, which includes selective aquatic plant herbicide treatments, mechanical harvesting, water quality monitoring, and production of the lake and watershed management guidebook. A copy of this plan can be found at the Stony Lake Property Owners website, [www.stonylakepropertyowners.com](http://www.stonylakepropertyowners.com).

The lake resident representative on the Stony Lake Improvement Board is Dave Zoller, [dzoller@hotmail.com](mailto:dzoller@hotmail.com).