



2024 Year In Review

December 30, 2024

It was December 7th, 2020, when the counties gained ownership of the 4 dam properties and bottom lands via condemnation from Boyce Hydro. We are 4 years later, there is significant progress to restore Secord Dam. Today we find ourselves with construction suspension due to multiple HCA legal actions.

The 2024 Year In Review will not dwell on the suspension as there is ample information available (we issued 20 NYCU or FAQ's, available on our website at the Resources tab, and held 6 informational sessions in 2024). We will instead focus on the positive actions of the Secord Lake Association (SLA) in our mission to RestoreTheLakes.

Our tag line is **Our Members Make A Difference**. As you read about the year, realize these contributions are from people you may know. They may be your neighbors. Within the Association, they are all friends with a common love for Secord and a strong desire to see our lake life return while reducing assessments and retaining property values for ALL.

The other question this review may answer – “Why join the Secord Lake Association?” If you like the things you read, we welcome you to become a part of it.

Advocacy For Additional Funding

We celebrate the active leadership SLA Members continue in the **RestoreTheLakes** campaign. This campaign, begun with a vision by Cliff Houser in April 2021, created alignment with all 4 Lake Associations, the Counties, Townships with elected officials to seek support. Collectively the Lake Associations, with help from Members and the community, delivered over 23,000 individually addressed / signed letters to elected officials (those letters stacked would be over 5-1/2 feet tall). This campaign helped the FLTF secure the \$200 million grant from the State. This grant allowed construction to begin on Secord Dam in Fall 2022 without any construction assessment from property owners.



Our connection with our federal officials continues to build awareness. Joel and Jeff have met several times with Congressman Moolenaar over the year and Chuck was invited to ride a segment of the State with Senator Gary Peters this past summer. Chuck was invited for the entire ride across the state this coming year.

We continue to strengthen our relationships with State Rep. Mike Hoadley and Bill Schutte Jr. One of our Members, Joel, spearheaded the adaptation of a program to defer assessments for low-income people with homestead properties. This program was retired by the State in 2020 and both Rep. Hoadley and Rep. Schutte introduced legislation to bring it back. While this program will not help everyone, it may be an option for some. We hope to see this legislation move forward with the new legislative session in 2025.



MI Rep Mike Hoadley joined us at the SLA Golf Outing this past September

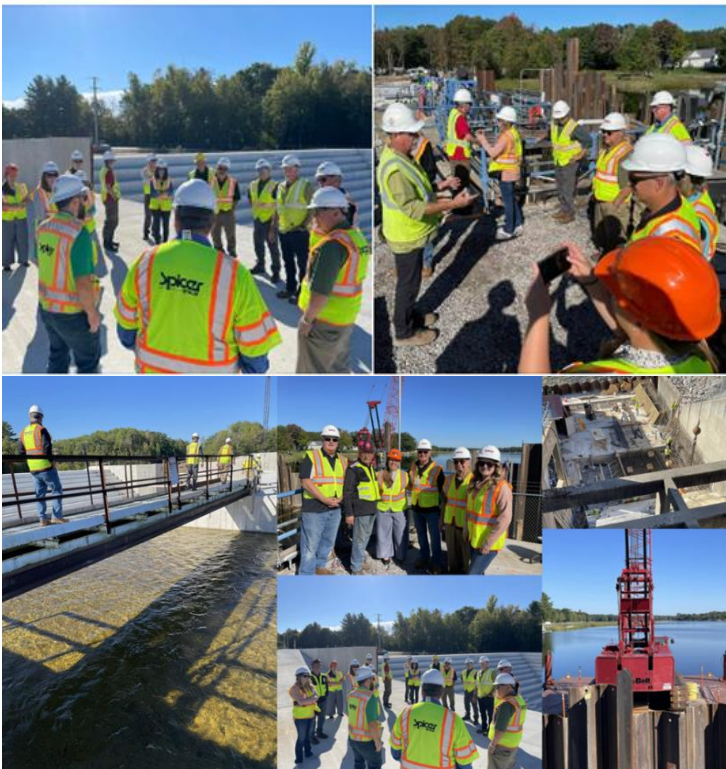
We thank both Rep. Hoadley and Rep. Schutte for their support and efforts. In 2024, each tried to secure \$50 million for construction of the 4 dams. While this is a sense of urgency for them, unfortunately their colleagues are not of the same mindset.

The HCA legal challenges make it difficult for our elected officials at the state and federal level to secure additional support. A common requirement of grants is the organization must not be encumbered with a lawsuit and needs to have the ability to provide required matching funds (for instance, the \$200 million MI grant requires a 20% match).

Secord Lake Association
October 1 at 9:47 AM

Last week, SLA Members Phil, Chuck, Joel and Jeff toured Secord dam with Spicer Engineers and Fisher Construction. In attendance that day were key staffers from the offices of MI Rep Bill Schuette, US Congressman Dan Kildee, US Congressman John Moolenaar and US Senator Gary Peters.

We received an update on dam construction and discussed the need for additional funding to help reduce assessments for all property owners. Our guests asked how the construction suspension will... See more



In October, we met a group from the offices of federal, state, local elected officials for a tour of Secord dam.

The objective was to continue to shine a spotlight on the need for additional financial support to reduce assessments for ALL property owners.

These ongoing SLA efforts, begun in April 2021 bring the vision Cliff Houser had to life as our lake association advocates for support to help rebuild.

Members of the SLA volunteer their time to FLTF in researching grant opportunities. Thank you to Ken, Brent and Tami.

We are committed to assisting the FLTF to secure additional support and grants from state, federal and private opportunities.

While we make no promises, we are hopeful once the legal challenges are behind us, additional help will be acquired.

Secord Social



Gladwin County and representative from Sen Peters office joined us for the Secord Dam Tour event.

A huge shout out for our sponsors of the **Secord Dam Pontoon Tour**. Not only were people able to “get up and close to the dam from the water with a guided tour”, but it also turned into a neighborhood block party.

Based on feedback, we plan to do this again this coming year at Secord Lake Marina – On the Water. More details to come.




Yumm Yumm Ice Cream LLC
“Hello, hello, hello . . . Hello”.



SLA Golf Outing

MARK YOUR CALENDARS - - 2025 Date is September 20th

Secord Lake Association 2024 Golf Outing Results

1st Place: Team Hojo at minus 13 

2nd Place: Team Westervelt at minus 12

10th Place: Team Frick at minus 6

Last Place: Team Jenny "We Had Fun" at plus 9

	<u>Women</u>	<u>Men</u>
Closest to the Pin	Courtney Friedle	Todd Madden
Longest Drive	Tami Vanlerbergle	Brian Grezeszak

Skins **Team Hojo #16 Eagle** Team Drabing #13 Birdie

Closest to the Pin Hole 9-1/2 sponsored by Secord Lake Marina
Dan Muska



SLA Chili Cook Off

MARK YOUR CALENDARS - - 2025 Date is October 18th

2024 Winners!

1st Place – Dennis Schroth

2nd Place – Courtney Friedle

3rd Place – Lisa Dziatczak

Thanks for all that participated!



A special thanks to our Sponsors - - You are appreciated and valued!

		
Sponsors		
<p>Bonham Heating and Air Conditioning Brubaker Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning, Inc Buckeye Market Michelle Ambrozaitis Dast Family DeWitt Lumber Company Elk Lake Bar & Grill Fresh Coast Tree Care Four Lakes Dock and Seawall Goodwin Septic Kim Butcher Agency - Farm Bureau Maverick Ford Gladwin</p>	<p>Midland Brewing Company Doug & Kyle Proctor Richardson of Gladwin S&H Engraving Schroth Family Statewide Surveying Sugar Shack Party Store The CT Lounge Wildwood Mercantile Wise Heating and Cooling RE/MAX River Haven - Marti Drabing Secord Lake Marina - On the Water</p>	
		

SLA Investments In Secord

Goose Management - - we allocated \$5,000 to get this program started in 2025. As the MI DNR has instituted new parameters for the management of geese, we have funds in reserve to further fund this project. Our plan is to coordinate with the 3 townships and the DNR. More to come in 2025.

Retake Our Lakes - - we appreciate the participation by property owners and the townships to coordinate efforts to prepare Secord to receive water. Unfortunately, the HCA construction suspension will extend the time we need to manage nuisance trees. We have allocated \$8,000 toward the continued management of nuisance trees. The SLA Retake Our Lake team led by Ken will have an updated plan to share as we move toward spring 2025.

Fireworks On The Dam - - based on feedback, we seek to bring this back to Secord Lake. This tradition was unfortunately suspended in the 1990's. Our vision is a block party at a local business to conclude with fireworks to celebrate the return of Secord Lake. We put \$3,000 into a savings account for this event and will make future additions.

FLTF - - in terms of Lake Improvement, we will not have a lake unless we have a dam. FLTF is delegated by the county to build the dam. Any donations go toward the project. Our \$5,000 donation is a private donation. Private donations to FLTF have value. The public grant arena is interested in other sources of money raised. In addition, private donors want to know who else is making private donations (FLTF has secured over \$5 million in private donations). Finally, most public grants require some type of "match." For instance, the MI Grant of \$200 million requires a 20% match with the funds coming from other sources. Our private donation, though a modest \$5,000, provides multiple benefits to the overall search for additional grants to reduce the assessment costs for ALL property owners.

With the uncertainty due to the ongoing HCA legal dispute causing what could be an additional multiple year delay for Secord, we are not sure what challenges we will face in the future. We decided to keep approximately \$44,000 in reserve for future projects or investment to restore Secord.

We discussed three other areas we seek to support with our fundraising efforts. While more information is required to move forward, we collectively agree to put resources against development of these plans:

- 1) If one of our **3 townships that surround Secord Lake has a lake improvement**, that they believe we can help with, please let us know. Help may be volunteer labor or financial assistance. We look forward to discussions with our township officials in the coming year.
- 2) **We know there will be situations where financially challenged people with HOMESTEAD properties may have difficulty paying their annual assessment.** There are a couple of Midland based foundations developing a program to help. Unfortunately, due to the HCA construction suspension, this planning has ceased pending a path forward. The SLA wants to make sure qualifying Secord Lake homestead residents can apply for assistance. We are willing to invest resources and money to this program's development.
- 3) **SLA Scholarship Program** - The future of Secord is the next generation. We want to invest in their success as that becomes our success. We look forward to the day our lake is restored, and we can focus on the future.

Our Members Make a Difference! From ongoing advocacy at the local, state and federal levels, to social events to bring our lake community together to include **FUN**draisers, to the SLA investing back into the Secord Lake Community. If you like what we did in 2024, please join us in 2025. You can learn more at www.SecordLakeAssociation.org

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