



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ's):

Public Information Meetings & Circuit Court Hearing

Why have I received this notice for Public Information Meetings?

- The Four Lakes Task Force invites you to attend a Public Information Meeting regarding the establishment of Michigan legal lake levels and a Special Assessment District (SAD) for Sanford, Wixom, Smallwood and Secord Lakes.
- The objective of the Four Lakes Task Force is to safeguard the lakes for future generations by establishing State of Michigan legal lake levels. By establishing these legal lake levels, the current levels will be sustained and managed locally into the future.
- You have been identified as owning property within the tentative Four Lakes Special Assessment District that has been petitioned for.
- A Map of the tentative Four Lakes Special Assessment District is available on the Four Lakes Task Force website at www.four-lakes-taskforce-mi.com.

What is a Special Assessment District?

- A Special Assessment District includes properties that would receive special assessments to pay for a particular benefit received from public projects such as lakes, drains, water lines, or roads.
- In this case, the tentative Four Lake Special Assessment District includes waterfront properties along the Four Lakes and “backlot” properties with dedicated (private easement) access. These properties benefit from sustaining the lakes now, and into the future.

What is the benefit of the Special Assessment District?

- With the establishment of State of Michigan legal lake levels and the Special Assessment District, the ownership of the Four Lakes would be transferred from Boyce Hydro to Midland and Gladwin Counties.
- The lake levels can be sustained for future generations regardless of future hydro power.
- The operation and maintenance of these lakes and dams will be controlled by a “Delegated Authority”, appointed by the Counties, with representation from each lake.

Is the lake level going to change?

- No. The lakes will be managed at the same levels as they have been for the past 20-30 years.
- The State of Michigan legal lake level will match the current elevations specified by Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) licenses.
- This process is designed to formally set this lake level in the State of Michigan, rather than rely only on the existing FERC licenses to do so. Should additional FERC licenses be revoked or expire, established Michigan lake levels will provide a legal requirement that lake levels are sustained.

Who will be responsible for maintaining the lake levels?

- The Four Lakes Task Force Board will be the Delegated Authority with oversight from County Commissioners.
- The Four Lakes Task Force Board will be responsible to maintain the established lake level set by a Circuit Court Order.

A Sustainable Future for the Four Lakes



What is the purpose of the [Public Information Meetings](#), and do I have to attend?

- The intent of these meetings is to share information with the public regarding the reasons for establishment of Michigan legal lake levels and the Special Assessment District (SAD). A Question/Answer period will allow the landowners within the tentative SAD to **ask questions and offer input** on those matters.
- Details for the meetings will be mailed to all property owners in the tentative Special Assessment District, posted on the Four Lakes Task Force website, and on our Facebook page.
- You do not have to attend any of the several public information meetings. However, we encourage you to attend any of these meetings to get additional information on the status of the dams and lakes, the process going forward, and the boundaries of the tentative SAD.

What is the purpose of the [Circuit Court Hearing](#), and do I have to attend?

- You do not need to attend the hearing. However, it is your right to do so.
- The Circuit Court hearing is a formal process in which you may present **sworn testimony and evidence** to the Court regarding establishment of the legal lake elevations and the establishment and confirmation of the Special Assessment District boundaries.
- Please note that you must protest in person or by writing to reserve your right to appeal the special assessment.

When do I receive my lake level special assessment?

- It is currently estimated the first assessment would be no sooner than your 2020 winter taxes, roughly two years from now.
- Assessment amounts may vary from year to year, depending on annual cost to operate and maintain dams.

What is my tentative assessment amount?

- Preliminary, estimated assessment amounts will be available at the Public Information Meetings.
- They are also available on the website, www.four-lakes-taskforce-mi.com.
- Notices for the Public Information Meetings and a separate notice of the Circuit Court Hearing will be sent out to all property owners within the tentative Special Assessment District.

Where can I get more information?

- You can attend one of several public information meetings, visit the Four Lakes Task Force website at www.four-lakes-taskforce-mi.com, send us an email through the website, or call (989) 315-8366 and leave us a detailed message, and we will follow up as soon as we can.