

An all – volunteer, 501(c)(3) – Serving Elk Rapids, Milton, Torch Lake, and Banks Townships

Winter Solstice 2024 Edition

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TODAY'S WEATHER:

www.wunderground.com/us/mi/kewadin

STORM CENTRAL

www.gtlakes.com/storm-central/



Traditions of Winter Solstice

<https://www.sunset.com/lifestyle/wellness/winter-solstice-rituals-nature#canyon-coffee-set> By Nena Farrell – EXCERPT

From a yule log to an evergreen wreath, celebrate the seasons' changes on December 21 with ancient rituals that resemble the Christmas traditions of today.

The shortest day of the year is near, marking the end of fall and the start of winter. The winter solstice is an ancient holiday known for rituals and traditions that celebrate nature and setting one's intentions for the coming year. Celebrate the solstice and beloved Christmas traditions.

Make a Yule Wreath - Burn a Yule Log - Decorate a Yule Tree

Sounds familiar! You've likely decorated your Christmas Tree, but in the old traditions, Yule trees were actual living outdoor trees, decorated with real candles, added ornaments of the sun, moon, and stars, and memories of loved ones.



TRAVERSE BAY BOTTOMLANDS - A DESERT NEARLY DEVOID OF LIFE TO FEED ALL SORTS OF FISH

RESTORING THE BAY FOOD WEB IS OVERWHELMING

BUT WE CAN RESTORE CREEK FLOW AND FOOD WEB ONE STREAM AT A TIME

RESTORE FLOW – MITCHELL CREEK-KEWADIN.

TNN Team of volunteer residents from Mud Lake, farm, rural, mid-stream, and Bay found that Creek flow is blocked by beaver dams and debris piles in its headwaters. It was estimated that beaver dams back held 4 feet of Mud Lake water. Rising lake level threatened a nearby home, flooded a two track road and standing water along Cairn Hwy for a quarter mile risks drowning a stand of Oaks, Maples, Beech trees and other hardwoods.



Volunteer Team agreed on a slow release of water in Autumn of 2023 to draw down Mud Lake. Care was taken to avoid flood risk to downstream property. The Antrim County Forester opened a portion of the dam. Mud Lake receded 2½ feet and 20 feet from the home's foundation. But hardwoods remain threatened by flooded root systems. The release was proof of concept for a Plan to remove dams and debris to high ground for future disposal.

PROGRESS THIS YEAR - 2024:

VISION - Restore water flow and food web for a spawning population of native brown trout. A work plan has been developed and contractors' identified. Drawings have been completed. Required EGLE Permit for removing debris piles and beaver dams has been applied for and is pending on-site staff review. Insurance coverage is being arranged. A budget of \$6,500 was set to clear Mitchell Creek-Kewadin head waters in the winter of 2024-25. Rotary Clubs of Elk Rapids and West Michigan District approved Grants totaling \$2,500. Donations to TNN from area residents are well on the way to the \$4,000 needed to fund this work.

PLEASE DONATE NOW TO PUT US OVER THE TOP!



 **SCAN ME**

Where is Mitchell Creek-Kewadin and why should I care?

Mitchell Cr. flows from Mud Lake into East Bay at Joe Marks Trail. Main channel bounded by Cairn Hwy, O'Dell Rd, East Bay, Erickson Rd, in Milton Township. Seven creeks in the TNN service area have similar flow loss near these roads – Williams, Winters, O'Dell, Cresswell, Golden Beach, Bay Colony, Torch Lake, Old Dixie, Norwood, and Clipper View.

TNN services: Elk Rapids, Milton, Torch Lake, (west) Banks Twps.



Les Cheneaux Islands (map), a bell weather for water levels in Lake Michigan – Huron. The islands lie in Lake Huron – just off-shore Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The blue boat house on the islands shows the lowest water in late 2013 (left photo) and the highest water in 2022 (right photo). The manmade range is about 6-0 feet. The natural range is about 4-0 feet. The water level in November 2024 is just below average – first time in ten years.

[AI Overview](#)

PLEASE DONATE TO TNN A 501(c)(3) Charity

Help TNN and Rotary restore
Mitchell Creek—Kewadin
Flow is blocked.

No water-no fish!

The TNN Volunteer Team

Residents - on farm, midstream,
rural, Bay, and Mud Lake.

Mitchell Creek -State designated trout
stream. **Class 4. Restore to Class 1.**
"High-quality wild trout waters with
natural reproductive populations."

TNN raised substantial seed money

- Remove obstructions and beavers in headwaters.
- Partially opened dam

PLAN-Restore flow this winter.

Please Donate:

Use PAY PAL or card on website.
www.townshipneighborsnetwork.com/donate/
Mail check to: TNN Treasurer, using
the form on the TNN website.

ORDER MARRAM GRASS NOW



Planting Time: March to May – Sep. to Dec.
Olde Path Inc.

<http://www.mydunegrass.com/about-dune-grass/planting-advice/>

Van's Pine Nursery

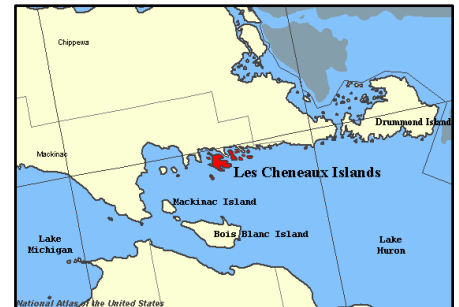
<https://www.vanspinesnursery.com/american-beach-grass/>

LAKE MICHIGAN-HURON WATER LEVEL - LOWEST IN 10 YEARS

Yes, Lake Michigan's water levels are below long-term averages for the first time in 10 years. In fact, monthly average for October 2024 was the first time since 2014 that it was below the long-term average.

Lake levels are determined by the net basin supply, which is the sum of precipitation and runoff minus evaporation. Evaporation increases in the fall when cold air mixes with the warm surface water, and this year's warm weather and little rainfall have increased evaporation.

The Great Lakes experienced a period of low water levels from 1999–2014 (mud flats), and water levels have been rising rapidly since 2014. In 2013, Lake Michigan-Huron reached an all-time record low of 576.02 feet. In 2020 the (Great) Lakes reached (6-0 feet) record highs.



MEET THE TNN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Visit www.townshipneighbors.com for more detailed biographies.

Keith Termaat, Pres.- Non-profit Executive, Antrim East Bay coastal region of L. Michigan. Boards: Professional Groups. Exec. Engineer (Ret) Ford Motor Co.

Scott Finch, Vice Pres. - Treasury Executive, Attorney, Finance and Corporate Strategy executive in Detroit, Wall Street, energy industry, non-profit board.

LTC (Ret) Ross Snare, Secy – Security & Defense consultant, family military tradition, PhD Operations Research. As Lt. Col., deployed to Afghanistan & Iraq.

Steve Carl - Corporate Strategy, Program Manager. global product development, Manufacturing Engineering. Ford Motor Co (Ret.). Registered Engineer, Michigan

Deborah Leich - Investment advisor. Managing Director Cap Visor Associates LLC. MI Municipal League Foundation Board, 100+ Women of Motown.

Herbert J. Roth MD (Ret) - Environmentalist, dark skies, manages village well Spine Surgeon (Ret). Sailed circle route to Caribbean. Life resident on GT Bay

Nels Veliquette - CFO Cherry Ke Inc, Michigan. Treasurer Cherry Bee Inc. Board, Shoreline Fruit LLC. Was Contributing Writer, 'Edible Grand Traverse'

NON-BOARD POSITIONS - **Treasurer** Indetech Services LLC (pro bono) – **Legal Counsel** Kristyn J. Houle, PLC (ad hoc)

THE SOUNDS OF SILENCE .
Inspired by Simon and Garfunkel

By: Keith Termaat

The silent beach invited me to walk. I was drawn to the home of a late Danish friend. He had told stories of the sea, his tag for East Bay. He crafted canes and Mackinaw boats. I'm his age now!

My silent walk was punctuated by sounds of life. Gulls are scarce along-shore. Though this year I observed two pairs – gulls breed for life. I love these raucous birds from my youth on North Sea beaches, seaports, and fish markets of the Netherlands.

A flock of Piping Plovers appears, eight up from three last season after a five-year absence. High water washed out nesting grounds – low water increases habitat. These tiny birds' cheerfully chirp as they catch snails. Plovers ground nest. Leash your pets.

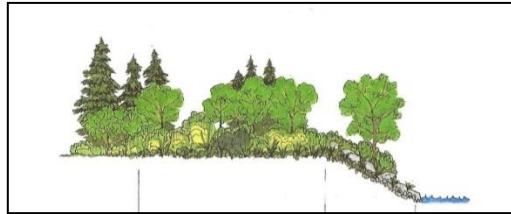
Beach life advances as water recedes.

A dove arrives as Junipers cut back at eroded bluffs sprout new growth on old wood. Red Twig Dogwood, Grape Ivy, Willows, Marram grass. A Loon calls his mate as I walk home. LISTEN!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ENNzjv8QjU>
 Voices: Common Loon. Courtesy of Cornell Lab of Ornithology

What is a "Riparian Buffer Zone" and Why is it Important?

BY: THI TROUT HEADWATERS, INC. <https://www.troutheadwaters.com/what-is-a-riparian-buffer-zone-and-why-is-it-important/>



A riparian buffer zone is the area of land directly adjacent to a waterway (lake, stream, river, or wetlands). Where these areas are healthy, they feature riparian vegetation, integral to

protecting water quality, ecological integrity, and biodiversity.

Natural & restored buffers serve critical functions for nature and people - improved wildlife habitat, fishing, and the joy of shore birds. The benefits to the watershed are water quality, lower cost clearing of sediments, and increased wildlife diversity.

Properly functioning buffers can sequester more carbon than annually cropped fields or cool-season pastures. Natural and restored riparian areas improve quality of life for rural & urban citizens. Protect riparian buffers on your property and near the water. We are in a "Goldilocks" time of L. Michigan average water level based on observations of 50 years of life alongshore. Bay waters have retreated from record highs. Nature is slowly returning natural beach vegetation. Help it along - plant Marram beach grass Spring and Fall. Add other plants which mimic nature.

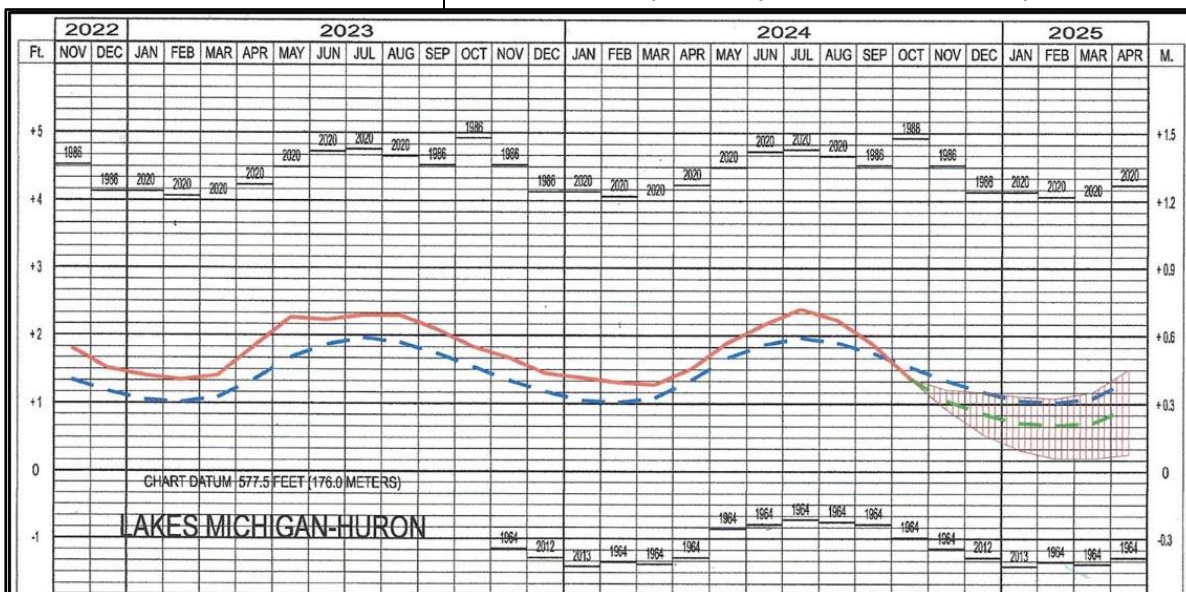
WATER LEVELS FORECAST NOV. 2024 - US Army Corps of Engineers – Detroit



Precipitation for October was far below average for the Great Lakes. Lake Michigan precipitation was 61% of historical average. Over the past year, total precipitation was below the long-term average for all Lake basins except L. Ontario.

All Lakes received well below average water supplies

Outflows through each respective Great Lakes connecting channel was above average in October except St Mary's River from Lake. Superior, which was below average.



Monthly mean levels for Michigan - Huron dropped 6 inches from September, for first time in 10 years.

All Great Lakes continue their seasonal decline and are projected to decline over the coming months.