

Saturday, April 25, 2020 Wixom Lake Refill Update ---WLA

Boyce Hydro has been slowly refilling Wixom Lake for the past 12 days. During this time the lake surface has risen about 4 feet from this winter's lows. Unfortunately, today April 25th, Wixom is presently 2-2.5 feet below the typical summer levels.

Although Governor Whitmer has now lifted restrictions on use of motorized watercraft, water levels are still too low to allow installation and use of many docks and boat/pontoon lifts on Wixom Lake. Shallower regions of the lake, those areas having less than 3' of depth during the typical summer, will find boating difficult to impossible, having only a foot, or less, water this weekend.

- Complicating matters is COVID-19, which resulted in closure of local marinas and lake service businesses. In speaking with Wixom Lake service providers and marine equipment stores, the Governor's easing restrictions announced yesterday 4/24; were not generally expected until May 1<sup>st</sup>, and it will take a bit of time for their staff to resume normal activities. It is not clear when all lake service businesses will be back in operation. Call ahead to verify.
- The low water conditions resulted in closure of the Dundas Rd. DNR launch ramp earlier this spring. The parking area was open last night, but the launch ramp was still barricaded and unusable.
- We are now experiencing a dry period in our area, with very little rain having fallen during the past two weeks. Spring runoff has lessened, and daily river flows have been diminishing. This has made refilling Wixom more challenging especially because FERC requires extra water discharge from the Sanford dam from March 15 through April 30<sup>th</sup> to protect and promote walleye spawning in the Tittibawassee River downstream of Sanford. Most of the extra water being released by Sanford flows through Wixom lake first, and could be retained in Wixom following April 30<sup>th</sup>, allowing Wixom to refill more rapidly. The FERC requirement to provide sufficient water downstream to Sanford Dam has been one of the factors slowing Wixom's refill.
- Many of the stumps exposed during the winter drawdown are no longer visible, but, may be only a foot, or so, below the surface this weekend! Be extremely careful if you decide to motor around on Wixom Lake before it is refilled. Also remember that the stumps are still there when the lake is full and may only have 3' of water over the top of them at the normal summer level.

We ask for your continued patience while the lake is refilling, and assure our members that your WLA representatives are strenuously engaged in returning Wixom Lake to its normal seasonal level. This year, that effort has been more difficult due to several uncontrollable events mentioned above.

Wixom Lake Association