



**FOUR LAKES TASK FORCE BOARD
SPECIAL ASSESSMENT DISTRICT
February 7, 2019**

To sustain the Four Lakes for future generations, the Four Lakes Task Force is pursuing the establishment of legal lake levels for Sanford, Wixom, Smallwood and Secord Lakes. With establishment of legal lake levels, ownership of lakes and dam components will need to be purchased from Boyce Hydro and transferred to Midland and Gladwin Counties. This will assure that the lakes can be sustained and locally managed for future generations, regardless of ability to generate hydroelectric power.

State of Michigan law, Part 307 of Michigan Public Act 451 of 1994, outlines the procedures for establishing legal lake levels. By resolution and in accordance with this law, the Midland and Gladwin County Board of Commissioners, authorized the Four Lakes Task Force to complete a lake level study.

A component of this lake level study is the preparation of a tentative Special Assessment District (SAD) for the Four Lakes. A map showing the tentative SAD is available on the Four Lakes Task Force website (www.four-lakes-taskforce-mi.com). The tentative SAD includes property owners who either own land that fronts Sanford, Wixom, Smallwood or Secord Lakes or who own land that has a dedicated (private easement) access to these lakes. The tentative SAD also includes lands that front the lakes and is owned by MDNR or local government. The Circuit Court has been petitioned to order the establishment of a legal or "normal" lake levels and establishment of the Four Lakes Special Assessment District. A Circuit Court hearing is presently being scheduled and all properties identified in the tentative SAD will receive a notice for the hearing.

Also, six public informational meetings will be conducted. These meetings will have a presentation of the findings of the lake level study. The presentation will include the planning level cost estimates, the tentative implementation schedule, the tentative special assessment district (SAD) and estimated yearly assessments. You will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide comments in a public forum and/or to meet individually with project engineers.

Should the lake levels and SAD be ordered by the Circuit Court, the SAD will be responsible for costs associated with establishing the legal lake levels and the costs associated with acquiring, repairing, improving, operating and maintaining dams to be compliant with State of Michigan dam safety standards. The dams will need proper operation, maintenance and repairs into the future, thus future assessments to properties in the tentative SAD would occur.

Current estimates of the initial cost/investment for establishing and maintaining legal lake levels, acquiring and then repairing the four dams to meet State of Michigan dam safety standards is approximately \$20 million. The State of Michigan has provided \$5 million dollars

Four Lakes Task Force

February 7, 2019



Four Lakes Task Force

towards repairs to the dams, thus reducing the cost to the SAD. The portion of the cost/investment not covered by grants or other funding will be shared by tentative SAD. It is anticipated this SAD portion of the cost will be spread over 20 years. The current estimated annual assessment for residential property owner of **a single parcel or adjacent parcels** that are associated with a single residence having less than 300 feet of property fronting the lake is \$350.

It is anticipated that the assessments will not be spread evenly amongst all property owners, for example, a property owner that fronts the lake will have a higher assessment than a property owner having a private easement but not fronting the lake. Also, a residential property owner will not have the same assessment as a commercial property owner. The tentative factors shown below have not been finalized and are intended for discussion and to illustrate the currently proposed methodology for spreading of the special assessment. The factor is simply a multiplier. To estimate the annual assessment for each property ownership class simply multiply the tentative factor by \$350. These numbers are for discussion and ARE NOT FINAL.

Property Owner Description	Tentative Factor
Residential property owner with less than 300 ft. of frontage	1
Commercial property owner with less than 300 ft. of frontage	1.5 to 3
Agricultural property owner with less than 300 ft. of frontage	1
Other property owner with less than 300 ft. of frontage	1 to 3
Residential property owner with greater than 300 ft. of frontage	2
Commercial property owner with greater than 300 ft. of frontage	3 to 6
Agricultural property owner with greater than 300 ft. of frontage	1 to 2
Other property owner with greater than 300 ft. of frontage	2 to 6
Residential property owner with private easement and no frontage	0.25
Commercial property owner with private easement and no frontage	0.5
Other property owner with private easement and no frontage	0.5

A Special Assessment hearing must be conducted prior to any assessments being levied. This is a separate hearing from the Circuit Court hearing of the SAD. Property owners in the SAD will receive a notice of the Special Assessment Hearing, at which, the exact amount of the special assessment will be known. The Special Assessment hearing is not anticipated to be sooner than late summer of 2020 and that assessments will not occur earlier than the winter taxes of 2020. It is possible this could be pushed back to 2021, dependent on progress with engineering, permitting, and construction bidding. The exact amount of the assessment will not be known until final construction permits have been issued.