



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



M. SCOTT BOWEN
DIRECTOR

December 23, 2025

VIA EMAIL: clerk@rosstownshipmi.gov

Mary Stage, Township Clerk
Ross Township
12086 M-89
Richland, Michigan 49083

Dear Ms. Stage:

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has concluded its investigation into the need for local watercraft controls on Gull Lake and finds that no additional special controls are warranted at this time.

The investigation into the need for special controls included a field investigation as well as a public hearing in Kalamazoo County.

Local watercraft controls (LWC) are authorized only when necessary to assure compatible use and protect public safety, where enforcement of existing regulations cannot address safety issues. Our investigation showed no documented complaints, citations, warnings, or boating incidents. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of the public input that was gathered during the investigation, the public hearing, and the public comment period were not in support of this proposal.

The LWC process outlined in Part 801, Marine Safety, Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA) will only allow the DNR to address compatibility of uses and public safety, not environmental or habitat concerns. As much as these concerns are at the core of the DNR's mission, our authority is bound by the law.

Based on the field investigation, a review of all input provided by the public, and a review of the law enforcement records, no valid boating safety concerns are evident which would demonstrate a need to add additional regulations. Your request has been denied.

There are inherent risks when operating a vessel, especially on unfamiliar water bodies. Operators are responsible for the safety of their vessel and the occupants, as well as other individuals and property in and on the water. As a courtesy, signs encouraging boaters to be cautious can be placed on the shoreline or at the end of docks with permission from the property owner.

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If you need further assistance, please contact me by email at wanlesst@michigan.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Wanless', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lt. Thomas R. Wanless
Boating Law Administrator
DNR Law Enforcement Division
Recreational Safety, Education & Enforcement

c: Sheriff Richard Fuller, Kalamazoo County
F/Lt. Stephen Mooney, DNR
Cpl. Jill Miller, DNR
Christina Hutchings, Township Supervisor