



7110 West Q Avenue | Kalamazoo, MI 49009 | www.texastownship.org | P: 269-375-1591 | F: 269-375-0791

November 15, 2021

Governor Gretchen Whitmer
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, Michigan 48909

RE: Request for Expediting the Flood Mitigation for Crooked Lake and Eagle Lake
EGLE Permit Application

Dear Governor Whitmer,

For the past four years, hundreds of Texas Township residents have suffered emotionally, physically, and financially from the historic flooding on Eagle Lake, Crooked Lake, and to surrounding lakes and developments similarly affected. At least nine homes were razed, and hundreds of homes/properties required extensive and costly repairs. At the peak of the flooding, water levels exceeded forty-three inches above their normal levels. Total damage assessments are still not possible as Eagle Lake has not yet reached a level for accurate assessments, but the impacts of the flooding are far-reaching, and our community is still reeling from this disaster.

In 2018, the Township partnered with the Lake Associations, property owners, and the Kalamazoo County Drain Office to construct a short-term pumping project to help mitigate the flooding. The short-term pumping project is one of the largest collaborative efforts in township history, requiring support and participation from hundreds of residents, stakeholders, community partners, and industry experts. We made incredible progress with the short-term pumping project; however, we know a permanent solution is imperative to ensure continued stability of water levels and minimize the risk of future flooding incidents of this scale.

While the short-term pumping project was in-process, we began work on engineering and designing the long-term project. To help fund the long-term project and assist our residents financially impacted from the flooding, we applied for a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant and after our second attempt, the Township was awarded the grant in 2020. This grant will partially fund the construction of the long-term project that is so desperately needed to prevent future flooding disasters.

The Kalamazoo County Drain Office and Township are again partnering with the Lake Associations and property owners to construct the long-term project. Prein & Newhof, our engineering firm, submitted the EGLE permit on October 28, 2021. EGLE has 30 days to determine the application is complete and another 90 days to review the permit. In the best-case scenario, we will be able to start construction in the Spring of 2022. Time is of the essence. The short-term project permit has terminated and we are



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no longer able to continue pumping to prevent additional flooding. Both lakes have improved significantly because of the short-term pumping project, but there are no safeguards in-place right now to prevent future flooding. Typically, both lakes rise approximately 12 inches from the snow melt and spring rains and because of the 10.36 inches of rain we received in the months of August, September and October, Eagle Lake is still 12.96 inches above their normal lake level that was established through the PA451 process in May 2021. At the highest water elevation Eagle Lake reached 903.80 and has receded 41.52 inches. The highest water elevation Crooked Lake reached was 898.20 and has receded 44.64 inches. Thankfully, Crooked Lake was able to reach their normal lake level from the short-term pumping project. While evaporation assisted with some of water reduction, the short-term pumping project was responsible for most of the decrease.

Having experienced the EGLE permitting process for the short-term project, we are extremely anxious about potential delays in the approval process. With no safeguard in place, we want to make every effort to ensure we do not lose the ground we regained from the short-term project. We urge you to ensure that our permit application is expeditiously reviewed so construction can start without delay and our residents can once again have some peace of mind as they have already suffered significantly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julie VanderWiere". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Julie VanderWiere
Superintendent
Charter Township of Texas
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CC: Ms. Liesl Clark, Director of EGLE

CC: Mr. Kyle Alexander, Kalamazoo District Supervisor, EGLE

CC: Mr. Derek Haroldson, Environmental Quality Analyst, Water Resources Division- Kalamazoo