

Dams work

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the amount of water that can flow. We have 20-some miles of lake trying to go through...

"We'll get there, it's just going to take some time."

Unlike the dry period for early- and mid-August, rain — often heavy — has been a common occurrence on the peninsula as of late.

For the 14-day period ending Aug. 23, the National Weather Service volunteer weather station in Maple City recorded only .02-inch of rain — a few sprinkles. Corn crops wilted and the cherry crop never sized out to its potential.

But during the 12 days that ended Tuesday, some 6.13 inches of rain was recorded at the station. And some owners of rain gauges reported measuring much more precipitation.

The heaviest of those rains fell on Labor Day afternoon with 1.74 inches. Rain again fell throughout Leelanau County yesterday.

Glen Lake's rising water level, however, has been welcomed.

"We are trying to re-establish the target levels," said Glen Lake watershed biologist Rob Karner. "We are getting back to normal mode... (recent rains) certainly helped. Our August drought put the dam down to the levels to what we call the 'water sharing program' to maintain the level in the Crystal River."

In short, the rain has helped alleviate that problem. The lakes have different personalities, with Lake Leelanau draining a geographic area nearly the length of the peninsula. Glen Lake, on the other hand, is fed only by a relatively small circle land that bordered by hilly terrain.

John Kassarian, former water level committee chair for Glen Lake Association, said a 1.92-inch increase in Glen Lake's water level has brought the lake back to normal. Prior to recent precipitation events, the lake level was low. "But not critical," he said. "It was getting pretty close. ... We have a strategy, mandated by the court, and we were right on target as of 12 (midnight) on the 4th."

Now that the lake level is restored, the association will continue to monitor levels in the lakes and the Crystal River, according to Kassarian.

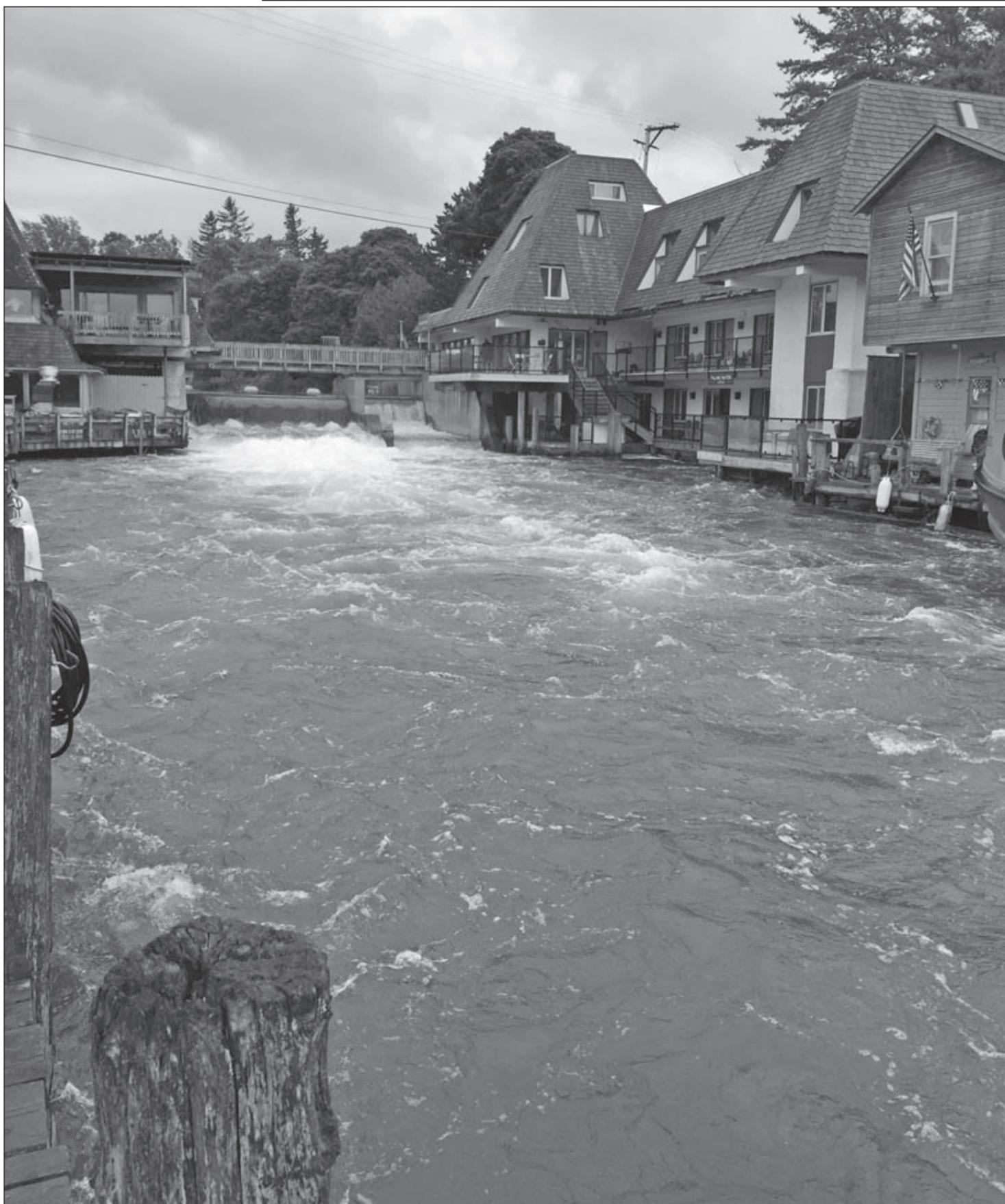
The dam regulating the water flow into the Crystal River is essentially wide open, he said. "That's all we can do."

What if more rain comes and lake levels continue to rise?

"It will not be devastating to the lake, but it will flood the people around the river. At that point, we will cut back the water flow to minimize flooding levels," Kassarian said.

"If it goes up maybe two inches on shoreline, it's not a real serious problem, but if we get high winds then (that) can cause erosion. And if the monitor on the Crystal River indicates we are starting to flood houses, then we start to cut back the river flow."

It's a balance dam operators strike year-round, reacting to Mother Nature's precipitation whims.



RECENT RAINS have caused lake levels to rise and the Leland Dam to churn out whitewater to lower Lake Leelanau, which is six inches high.

Supervisors mixed on Ironman

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about the topic by the *Leelanau Enterprise* made it clear that decisions

will be up to their entire, elected township boards, not themselves as individual supervisors.

"I don't personally have any opposition to the event coming through Centerville Township," said township Supervisor Jim Schwantes. "It's on our agenda to discuss, and we've only heard from one constituent so far who's opposed to it."

Schwantes noted that the Centerville Township Board has not yet developed a formal policy on how to process such requests.

Bingham Township Supervisor Midge Werner was skeptical of the proposal, expressing concern about the impact on the Leelanau County Sheriff's Office and local farmers.

"You never know exactly when people need to harvest, and when it's time to put farm equipment on the road, that's when you have to do it," Werner said. She added that overtime hours required of the county's limited number of road patrol deputies could present a burden as well.

Suttons Bay Township Supervisor Rich Bahle said, "At first glance, I'm in favor of it."

Bahle said he had not yet heard directly from anyone about the event and it hadn't yet been placed on a

board agenda. But, Bahle said, the county's "carrying capacity" for such events ought to be a consideration even if it's good to have more people visiting the county.

Elmwood Township Supervisor Jeff Shaw said, with tongue in cheek, that, "I am 100-percent in support of letting the Township Board decide" on whether to host the Ironman bicycling event.

"Personally, I'm in favor of it and I've done some of these races myself — they're a wonderful thing, and people would appreciate doing an Ironman in such a beautiful place as ours," Shaw said.

Leland Township Supervisor Susan Och noted that her job outside of being a township supervisor involves accommodating seasonal visitors. She's almost been too busy lately to think about Ironman.

"It's good to promote our area — but how much more promotion do we need?" Och asked rhetorically. "It almost seems tone deaf to ask someone who works for a living around here — at the end of the summer — whether we'd like to see yet another big event coming through at the end of the summer season."

Kasson Township Supervisor Greg

Julian had a more positive outlook.

"If it's well planned and safe, I think we would welcome having it in our township," Julian said. "Ironman is a healthy, worthwhile physical endeavor."

The supervisor of neighboring Solon Township, however, was not as enthusiastic.

"I'm against having bike races on public roads at all," said Supervisor Jim Lautner. "It's always a fight to take agricultural equipment on the roads when its being overrun by bicycles. It's pretty dangerous, and I can't see why this would be good for Solon Township at all."

Tkach told the *Enterprise* this week that the exact route of the bicycling portion of the Ironman event has not yet been decided, and decisions will definitely take into account the concerns of local communities that may be affected.

"We still plan to start going around to township boards starting this month," Tkach said, "and we hope to make it clear that this is a very well-organized event that will bring more benefits than disruption to the community."

LEELANAU WEATHER BREAK

**Northwest Michigan Horticulture Research Center
located in Bingham Township**

	8/29	8/30	8/31	9/1	9/2	9/3	9/4
High	68	69	78	79	80	78	83
Low	55	50	55	66	65	67	66
Rain/ Snow	0.07"	0"	0"	0.05"	0.02"	0"	0.39"

**National Weather Service Forecast Office
Co-op Station in Maple City**

	8/29	8/30	8/31	9/1	9/2	9/3	9/4
High	68	69	80	77	82	79	84
Low	59	47	51	65	65	68	65
Rain/ Snow	0.37"	0"	0"	0.85"	0"	0.12"	1.74"