

Swimmer's Itch Meeting Notes

Thursday, April 16, 2026

INTRODUCTIONS

Present In Person: Detroit Lakes City Administrator, Kelcey Klemm
City of Detroit Lakes City Clerk, Kari Tyson
PRWD Water Resources Coordinator Josh Beranek
Detroit Lakes Council Member, Ron Zeman
Detroit Lakes Public Works Director, Shawn King
PRWD Interim Administrator, Shanna Bach
MNDNR Assistant Area Wildlife Manager, Rob Baden
Detroit Lakes Mayor, Matt Brenk
MNDNR Aquatic Plant Management Specialist, Ryan Carrow
Detroit Lakes Council Member Craig Caulfield
Lake Detroiters Association, John Flynn
Lake Detroiters Association Leon Senn

Present Online: Detroit Lakes Council Member Mike Stearns
PLM Applicator, David Hillstrom
Lake Sallie Association, Birch Burdick
Lake Sallie Association, Sandi Gruhot

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE OF MEETING

Swimmer's Itch is becoming more and more of a public nuisance to beach and lake users in the area.

Pelican Lake has done more work on this topic, and it appears that the current parasite is more severe than previous ones, and the merganser ducks could be part of the problem.

The issue of obtaining the permit from the DNR is also cumbersome and could use some clarification done to make it easier to find and complete.

CITY PROCEDURE

The City of Detroit Lakes works with PLM to treat the beach twice a season, usually right before the 4th of July and again in early August. However, users are complaining earlier in the season about the issue.

DNR INPUT

There aren't currently any other treatment options available. The copper sulfate kills everything in the vicinity, so it can be toxic to the lake and fish if applied too frequently or too much.

SUMMER 2026 OPTIONS

Options for 2026 were discussed, as the issue is not going to go away overnight.

1. The City is installing showers along the beach as part of the beach improvements.
2. Educate the public through signage, and possibly a social media campaign collaborated with the City, PRWD, and Lake Detroiters.
3. Education can include information on preventative ideas including rash guards, the creams and oils, and other tips.
4. Treatment permitting for homeowners. Lake Detroiters will work on educating homeowners how to apply for permits and or get in touch with PLM for application of treatments.
5. PRWD will work to do a flyer to make it easier for people to learn about how to apply for permits.
6. PRWD doing research this summer and Lake Detroiters are using the same person to come and speak at their annual meeting.