

# FAQs

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## NOTICE OF HEARING TO AMEND LAKE LEVEL ORDER SADDLE LAKE

### ***Why am I receiving this notice?***

You are receiving this notice because you own lands within the current or proposed lake level special assessment district for Saddle Lake.

### ***What is a legally established lake level?***

Part 307 of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act allows circuit courts to establish lake levels for inland lakes to, among other things, benefit property owners and preserve Michigan's natural resources. Saddle Lake has court ordered summer and winter lake levels under Part 307.

### ***What is a special assessment district?***

A special assessment district is an area of land designated to receive special assessments for a particular benefit received from certain public projects, like lake levels.

### ***Will this impact the levels of Saddle Lake?***

No. The intent of the proposed amendments is **not** to impact the physical lake levels that property owners are used to seeing on Saddle Lake.

### ***Why is the lake level order being amended?***

The Van Buren County Drain Commissioner initiated a project to replace the lake level control structure on Saddle Lake. As part of the project, the Drain Commissioner reviewed the historical lake level orders for Saddle Lake and found that they require revisions to be consistent with state law and the planned operation of the lake level control structure.

Specifically, the proposed amendments would clarify the measurement location for the legal lake level, update the survey datum to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988 (NAVD88), clarify that the lake level is subject to temporary variations due to things like weather and natural conditions, and "clean-up" other language in the order. The amendments would also update the special assessment district boundaries to ensure they accurately reflect the properties that benefit from the lake levels.

### ***What is my assessment amount?***

The court hearing to amend the lake level order will **not** consider lake level special assessments. A separate public hearing process is required to impose any lake level special assessments on property owners.

### ***Do I have to attend the Circuit Court hearing?***

You are not required to attend the Circuit Court hearing; however, it is your right to do so. You may also present testimony and evidence to the Court regarding the proposed lake level order amendments.

### ***How can I get more information?***

A recorded webinar about the lake level order and the court hearing is posted at: <https://www.vanburencountymi.gov/515/Meeting-Notices---Notice-Lettings>. You may also call (269) 205-3293 or email [vanburencdc@gmail.com](mailto:vanburencdc@gmail.com). When leaving a voicemail, please include your name, address, and phone number. We will be glad to answer any questions, and all calls will be returned in the order in which they are received.